IN SEARCH OF KĀLIDĀSA'S THOUGHT WORLD

A Study of Kumārasaṃbhava

Ranajit Sarkar

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KUMĀRASAṂBHAVA

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Akhila Bharatiya Sanskrit Parishad
Lucknow (India)

Publishers :

Akhila Bharatiya Sanskrit Parishad
Mahatma Gandhi Marg, Hazratganj
Lucknow—226001 (India)
Phone : 43962

First Edition 1985

Price : Rs. 132.50

Printers :

Pnar Mudrak
117, Nazirabad,
Lucknow (India)

The first effort of philosophy is to know for the sake of pure understanding, but her greater height is to take Truth alive in the spirit and clasp and grow one with her and be consciously within ourselves all the reality we have learned to know. But that is precisely what the poet strives to do in his own way by intuition and imagination, when he labours to bring himself close to and be one by delight with the thing of beauty which awakes his joy.

Sri Aurobindo

The medium is the message.

M. McLuhan

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

I am writing this note with a mixed feeling of joy and sorrow—joy for presenting this interesting study of Kālidāsa and *Kumārasambhava* to the world of scholars and sorrow for the fact that the person who inspired, nay, persuaded, the author to allow this work to be published by the Akhila Bharatiya Sanskrit Parishad, Lucknow is no more with us to share the satisfaction with the author that the book has ultimately seen the light of the day. I am discharging the most pleasant duty of presenting this illuminating and scholarly work to the scholars with a heavy heart, bowing in reverence to the sacred memory of Shri Gopal Chandra Sinha, who lived and died for the Parishad; and who would have discharged this duty with more pleasure and pride.

The present study of the *Kumārasambhava* is a result of the author's continued study of and sustained interest in Kālidāsa and his poetry. The main object of the author in this study is 'to look for certain structures which would give a coherence and a justification to the Kālidāsa's world-picture'. The learned author, who has done his best to present an objective study of the *Kumārasambhava* in an entirely new perspective, rightly claims that 'this study, not being purely philological, can, I hope, also be read by people interested in poetry in general, without a special knowledge of Sanskrit language'.

The author, Dr. Ranajit Sarkar, had been associated with Shri Aurobindo and his *Āśrama* for long and hence, it is quite natural that he should aim at not studying 'the imaginative or image-making faculty of the poet' but at seeing 'how some philosophical ideas have been transmuted and poeticized'. He is justified in disagreeing, though in his characteristic humility, with Keith who holds the view that 'youth and manhood are no time for deep philosophic views and the Kālidāsa of *Ṛtusaṃhāra*, *Meghadūta* and *Kumārasambhava* remains within narrow limits'. The author has tried to prove that 'from the pointe of view of philosophy the two epics of Kālidāsa–*Kumārasambhava* and *Raghuvaṃśa*—are complimentary and from a thorough

study of the former he has arrived at a conclusion that 'in fact, the first has more pure philosophy, for through characters, imagery and symbolism, Kālidāsa holds up a speculative interpretation of existence, the fundamentals of Vedānta, the Sāṃkhya, and the Yoga philosophies transmuted into the substance of poetry. Whereas in the latter it is rather an ethico-religious interpretation of life'.

Although parts of the present study were presented as separate papers at the sessions of the World Sanskrit Conference held at Turin and Paris, it would be better to go through the study in its entirety in order to appreciate the approach of the author in his efforts to interpret Kālidāsa and his *Kumārasambhava* in an altogether novel manner. The four Indices appended to the book have enhanced its worth and utility. The Parishad has always aimed at bringing out standard publications, which have won universal appreciation. I am sure the present work will also be received with all the warmth it deserves, as it falls in line with other publications of the Parishad and bear a testimony to the mature scholarship of the author. The Parishad is grateful to Dr. Sarkar for allowing it to publish this valuable work.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not put on record the interest and enthusiasm shown in its publication by the late Dr. K. P. Srivastava, former Director (Administration) of the Parishad, who too has been snatched away by the cruel hands of death while the publication of this book, like all other activities of the Parishad required him ever more after the passing away of its Founder-Secretary, Shri Gopal Chandra Sinha.

In the end I have to thank Shri Vishwa Mohan, Proprietor of Pnar Mudrak for all the care and precision with which he has printed the book.

J. P. Sinha
Secretary

PERFACE

A few years ago I gave a series of lectures on KS to my students at the Institute of Indian Studies, State University of Groningen. In the course of these lectures I realized that a work such as KS, contains a complex world of thought and ideas structured within its aesthetic form. If we could reveal some of these thought-structures, we would, I thought, get a better understanding of the poet's world, and thereby create a mental attitude more suitable to the experience of *rasa*, which is the essential aim of reading poetry.

Most works written on Sanskrit poetry are either historical and philological studies, or else they are impressionistic criticism. My object has been to look for certain structures which would give a coherence and a justification to the Kālidāsian world-picture. An intuitive appreciation of a sensitive reader, a *sahṛdaya*, is all right for the sheer enjoyment of a poem, but a methodical exploration of the different levels of meaning, different reflections of the poetic world, can, I believe, add a new dimension to the enjoyment. But I acknowledge that no amount of study can exhaust a poem as complex as KS. Poetic language breaks the ordinary frontiers of our work-a-day reality and re-creates new relations with reality and history—history of the poet's individual growth, as well as that of his environment. This is only a humble effort to unravel some of these hidden relations.

This study, not being purely philological, can, I hope, also be read by people interested in poetry in general, without a specialized knowledge of the Sanskrit language. I have therefore given a translation of the Sanskrit quotations within the body of the work. I have made new translations, although there exist various translations by various scholars. The reason for making new translations is not that I consider the others inferior to mine but that my reading of the text often differs from other existing translations. Apart from all the linguistic requirements needed for translating Sanskrit verses, we need, when we are dealing with a long poem, a *mahākāvya*, a very clear understanding and a definite fixing of the context.

The verses, at the outset, seem to be independent units, strung more or less loosely together with a thin narrative thread. But when we enter deep into the poem we find that a verse cannot be interpreted nor consequently, translated without taking into account the whole poem. The meaning of the first verse is, so to say, determined by the last one. And I admit that even the understanding of the context can differ from reader to reader according to the spotlights one projects on some particular facets of the poetic world; these spotlights are, in their turn, determined by the aims a reader sets before him.

Translations can in no way replace the original text, they can grasp only a few elements of the original, and moreover they often introduce matters foreign to the original. I have given, almost always, the Sanskrit text followed by my translation, in which no special effort has been made to infuse any artistic quality. In case I was obliged to repeat a quotaion I have given the translation only.

For the use of Sanskrit words within my text I had to take some decisions. Following are some of the guidelines I have observed.

1) Capitalization of Sanskrit words can be quite tricky. In KS particularly, I met with some complications. Words like *kāma*, love, *vasanta*, spring, are sometimes used in such a way that it is impossible to determine whether they are to be considered as personifications or as abstract concepts. Words such as these and also *puruṣa*, *prakṛti* etc. have been capitalized when I have intended a personification. For *Brahman* (masc.) I have used the nominative form *Brahmā*, to indicate the personal creator.

2) Formation of plurals of Sanskrit words. I have decided to write them unaltered, i. e. without the addition of the English plural-signs in order to avoid the creation of hybrid monstrosities as *tapases*, *apsarases*. However I have not taken the librty of purging the plurals in quotations from other writers.

3) Another problem I was faced with was in relation to the use of names. All the characters of the poem, in particular Śiva and Pārvatī are mentioned by various names, the use of these names is not arbitrary, as I have tried to show in the case of Śiva. However, I have used in my text and in the translation one name only. Thus I have written Śiva, Pārvatī, Kāma, instead of, say, Rudra, Umā Madana etc.

4) In the quotations from other writers I have, mostly, used diacritical marks even when the writers themselves did not use them. This was

to make uniform the transliteration of Sanskrit words. However I have not tampered with the names of modern Indian writers.

Parts of the study were presented as separate papers at the World Sanskrit Conference in Turin and in Paris. Both these were published by Prof. Oscar Botto in *Indologica Taurinensia* under the titles "The Poetical Transmutation of Some Philosophical Concepts in Kumārasaṃbhava" and 'Night' and 'Day' in Kumārasaṃbhava : An Investigation into the Suggestive Meaning". I take this opportunity to thank Prof. Botto and all those who made comments and critical remarks on these papers. I thank also Prof. J. Ensink, (Retd.) Head of the Insitute of Indian Studies, State University of Groningen, and other colleagues of mine for their active and sympathetic interest in my work.

I would also like to acknowledge my gratefulness to the Bharatiya Sanskrit Parishad, and in particular, Shri Gopal Chandra Sinha and Dr. J. P. Sinha, for undertaking the publication of this work.

Finally I give my thanks to my wife who has always helped me not only through love and encouragement, but more concretely by typing my rough draft; my sister Namita, who lovingly sacrificed a part of her holidays here in Holland to shut herself up and prepare the final typescript; and to Mrs. Marjan J. Rigterink, the Secretary of our Institute, for performing the tedious task of typing the notes, and the bibliography.

Ranajit Sarkar

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: POETICAL TRANSMUTATION OF PHILOSOPHICAL IDEAS

When we want to study critically a poem, we find that it is a complex of many interrelated strata. There is, firstly, the sound-stratum, *śabda*; the next stratum which arises from the first is that of meaning, *artha*. The combination of these two gives rise to a syntactic structure which is the poetic world. The ultimate goal of the study of poetry should be, as Sanskrit poetics discovered long ago, enjoyment, aesthetic delight, *rasa*. However, there is often a long way to go from the first encounter with the poetic text to the final experience of *rasa*. This experience is not altogether gratuitous. There is first the problem of textual criticism, the study of the stratum of *śabda*; then the study of the various problems of the units of meaning, *artha*, as those of semantics, imagery, diction. As a result of this twofold study the literary critic arrives at the stratum of the poetic world.

The realities that fill the poetic world can be either imaginative realities or conceptual realities—philosophical ideas. In fact, these two kinds of realities are not altogether separate within the poetic texture, although poets themselves and critics too have at different periods emphasized either the compatibility or else the incompatibility of philosophy and poetry. Salvatore Quasimodo sees philosophers, and consequently philosophies, as natural enemies of poets[1]. On the other hand, Erich Heller equates poetry to thinking, 'the poetry is the ideas and the ideas are poetry'[2]. Both these views are extreme and are not shared either by all poets or by all critics. The idea that poetry and philosophy are incompatible has become most pronounced in the modern period. Modern poets have explored various ways to liberate themselves from the so-called tyranny of ideas by trying to eliminate from their poetic world all thoughts, notions, concepts, ideas. This escapism has not become a complete success, neither has it been accepted universally—and most poets have realized that the only sure means of liberation from the tyranny of ideas is to be master of the ideas instead of trying to evade them.

It has also been said that poetry is not what it says but the way in which it is said. The quarrel between substance and form is now quite old but it has not lost all its vigour. Modern poets have gone as far as to say that 'a poem should not mean but be'. Nobody with any poetic insight, I believe, will deny that the essential function of poetry is to be. But can poetry really exist without any meaning? Poetry always says something. If it does not, it betrays its own existence. But the way of saying in poetry is certainly very different from the prose diction. In prose words do not exist by themselves; they do not have a life-vibration. They are only beasts of burden made to carry the weight of information and thought. But in poetry words are vibrant with life. They are the inhabitants of the poetic world. Ideas are subservient to words. It is in this sense, I think, that we have to understand Mallarmé's dictum that 'poems are made not of ideas, but of words'.

As impartial students of poetry we have to steer clear of the two extremes and not be influenced by fashionable theories or guiding principles of any critical school. We have to recognize that both reflective thought and imagination, both substance and form have relevancy to the study of poetry. We cannot deny history, we have to admit that "the greatest poets have been always those who have had a large and powerful interpretative vision of Nature and life and man and whose poetry has risen out of that in a supreme revelatory utterance of it"[3]. The thought, the idea, the philosophy has to be there but what makes a linguistic enunciation poetic is finally the "utterance", the word-form, the imagination made concrete.

What then is the place of philosophy in poetry? How does it appear in the poetic world? Before we undertake to answer these questions, we should make explicit what we mean by philosophy. Philosophy is generally seen either as a seeking for abstract truths in a world of ideas and words, "a rational knowledge, a seeking of intelligibility"[4] or else "a moral seeking, the seeking of our true destination, and a learning of virtue"[5]. In any case, philosophy is, to begin with, "a reflection on the real experiences of human consciousness and its final aim is to "bring out the significance of these experiences"[6]. In this definition we should note that the basic data of philosophy are the same as those of poetry, viz. "the real experiences of human consciousness". However, the working out of these experiences is different. Philosophy proceeds by discursive reasoning whereas poetry takes the path of imaginative and symbolic formulation. Most thinkers no longer admit the incompatibility of philosophy with poetry or for that matter, with any other form of human understanding and seeking.

Poetry, as also other creative forms, does not grow far removed from philosophy. A philosophy which develops from the real experiences of

human consciousness, from *darśana,* the act of perception, is not limited to the intellect alone, but enlarges and strengthens our aesthetic view of the world. Philosophy gives to poetry a deeper insight into the meaning of existence. Reflective thought is not foreign to poetry. Rājaśekhara, poet and theorist of poetry, says that both knowledge, *Vyutpatti,* and imagination, *pratibhā,* are essential to the making of a poet. And in *Vyutpatti* he includes the knowledge of the *śāstra,* which include intuitive revelatory knowledge as the Vedic and the Vedantic as well as the more discursive knowledge, *ānvīkṣiki,* like Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Nyāya and even the materialistic philosophy of Lokāyata[7]. The insistance on *vyutpatti,* knowledge, as an essential factor of poetic formation, not only in Rājaśekhara but also in other Indian theorists of poetry, was not considered as a "mere 'emoting' completely detached from the responsibilities of rational thought"[8].

Is the place of philosophy, then, merely external to poetry, necessary for the preparatory phase but with no implication for the poetry itself ? Not so. Philosophy as we understand it, permeates poetry. It is true that poetry cannot exist without imaginative realities ; it is also true that the existence of poetry without any idea, without meaning, can only be an illusory existence. But ideas, reflective thoughts have to be transformed by imagination, if they have to be a real part of poetry, because, as Indian theorists say, *pratibhā* is the source of poetry, or as A. C. Bradley puts it, the specific genius of a poet does not lie in reflective thought but in the imagination, "...his deepest and most original interpretation is likely to come by way of the imagination. And the specific way of the imagination is not to clothe in imagery consciously held ideas, it is to produce half-consciously a matter from which, when produced, the reader may, if he chooses, extract ideas"[9]. Philosophy then has its place in poetry by being changed half-consociously into a poetic matter ; or with Susanne Langer we can say that there is here a "symbolic transformation"[10].

Philosophy, therefore, does not appear in the poetic world as ideas consciously clothed in imagery, or as a metrical enunciation of a thought or as a versified philosophical treatise. By the symbolic transformation philoscophy becomes poetic matter. Traditional literary analysis either neglects to delve into this matter or else remains content with the finding of evident philosophical aphorisms which are sometimes embedded in poetry.

One may pick up from the works of Kālidāsa, for instance, verses which embody a certain idea. To take a few examples :

vikāra-hetau sati vikriyante yeṣāṃ na cetāṃsi ta eva dhīrāḥ |
(*KS.* 1.59)

They alone are really calm whose minds are not perturbed even when there is a cause of perturbation.

or,

strī-pumān ity aṛnāsthaiṣā vṛttaṃ hi mahitaṃ satām|
(*KS.* 6.12)

for, to the good, it does not matter whether one is a man or a woman, they honour only character.

With the help of such sayings a critic may build up the so-called "philosophy of Kālidāsa". But it is not such an intellectualist and scholastic search which we are going to undertake. This evident philosophy does not constitute an integral part of the poetic world, for even if we take these philosophical verses out of their context, they do not lose their philosophical value. They lie, indeed, only in the borderland of the poetic world. They live by content alone; the form is just an outer garment which can be changed without losing any of its value: content and form are here not the expressions of the same insight. When one looks only for express surface-ideas one does not study poetry as poetry. What we want of poetry is, first and foremost, enjoyment, aesthetic delight. Our enjoyment, *rasāsvādana*, of the poet's world cannot be complete unless we are able to apprehend it. As the poet's world is not made of ideas alone, our apprehension is likewise bound to be complexer than a mental understanding. With the help of words a poet re-creates his vision of Reality, sensuous, emotional, intellectual and spiritual. And the total understanding of a poem then involves a journey into that complex world in which our only guides are words, and where we have to take into consideration intellectual meaning as well as the multilateral symbolic meaning that a poet evokes by means of rhythm, metaphors and various other powers of the word which he is capable of mustering. Of this vast and complex world we shall here consider only a small part—the philosophical matter and its symbolic transformation into poetic matter.

Poetry embodies some sort of truth, which is the truth of the poet's vision of reality. Philosophy too embodies truth, in a different way, and that truth is founded upon speculation about Reality. In respect to poetry we use the words "imagination", "vision", instead of "speculation" or "cogitation". Thus, the distinction we can draw between the poetic and the philosophical activity is that the former is imaginative and the latter speculative. These two functions do not necessarily exclude one another. On the contrary, we find that great poets have often combined in themselves these two functions. This does not mean that to be a great poet one has to be a philosopher too and build up a new system of philosophy. It only means that the poet's

reflective mentality assimilates thoughts and philosophical ideas which are later transmuted by his imaginative consciousness into the substance and body of poetry.

Therefore, it is not just idea for idea's sake which is the province of a poet. He may or may not have original ideas. His ideas may be the same as those shared by thousands of his contemporaries; he may even take ideas from a ready-made system of thought. It is not the originality of ideas, a new speculative genius, that we should look for in poetry. How the poet has transformed a certain idea into a living reality, how he has given life, body and soul to an abstract concept—this is the problem that should preoccupy our critical quest for ideas in poetry. In poetry, writes Georges Cattaui, "l *'Idée* se fait *Verbe*"[11]. In this connection he uses words and expressions such as "to become embodied", "to become perceptible", "trans-substantiation".

Other critics too have spoken of this sea-change, and have pointed out the difference between the use of idea in philosophy and its use in poetry or artistic creation. Newton P. Stallknecht speaks of "the mutations that ideas most usually undergo as they pass from thinker to artist"[12]. The poet and the thinker may have the 'same' idea but the poet's treatment of it is "imaginative, figurative, or metaphorical". The thinker has to elaborate an argument; he has to be logically consistent. He even sacrifices aspects of reality which do not fall within the given limits of a system. But the poet knows that life is vaster than thought; he mocks at logical consistency and does not hesitate to entertain contradictory doctrines, for life is multifarious and complex. He also knows intuitively that what is contradictory within a closed system is self-existent in an open world. Therefore, we should bear in mind the warning of Wellek and Warren when we look for ideas in poetry. "The reduction of a work of art to a doctrinal statement—or, even worse, the isolation of passages—is disastrous to understanding the uniqueness of a work: it disintegrates its structure and imposes alien criteria of value"[13].

Poets then, make use of philosophical ideas but they transmute or trans-substantiate them. We shall by and by try to inquire into the process of this transmutation. But from the outset we should remember that philosophy written in verse is not poetry. In India not only philosophy but astronomy and medicine, politics and sociology, all sciences, all informations were put into verse. But neither the writers themselves nor the readers and critics ever considered these as poetic creations. Yet there have always been some versified philosophical writings which have been taken as poetry for a short or a long period of time. And it is interesting to see that the fashion for such

philosophical poetry returns from time to time and secures allegiance of some fervent admirers. Such poetry, however, is "apt to be", says Sri Aurobindo, "full of ingenious conceits, logic, argumentation, rhetorical turns, ornamental fancies, echoes learned and imitative rather than uplifted and transformed"[14].

Unfortunately, even in great poets there are moments of such philosophy. The expression may be powerful, pithy, memorable; it may satisfy our reasoning intellect enamoured of clarity and precise enunciation, but it can hardly give us the aesthetic delight which we demand of poetry and which somehow touches not only our mind but our whole being. Ideas which are made incarnate, are uplifted and transformed by the imaginative faculty of the poet and acquire the power of moving us, of giving us the taste of the poetic delight. In the case of poetically transmuted ideas there is no worry about logical relevancy, about proof of argumentation; "sheer *enjoyment* takes the place of acceptance or rejection. The idea in its embodiment is admired rather than defended. Poets, it would seem, have a way of enjoying an idea without feeling any obligation to demonstrate or verify."[15] Because of this divine unconcern of the poet for rationality and a diviner power of discovering and communicating the beauty of an idea, readers too are irresistably drawn to its enjoyment. For philosophy to be poetry one should first of all find the beauty of ideas. As objects in the physical world move us aesthetically, likewise ideas, those objects of the intellectual world, may be made to move us. Emotions can rise from the mental representation of reality when they are in harmony with the poet's perception and sensibility. Georges Mounin says that true philosophical poetry is scarce in modern times because most of our contemporaries think in one world and feel in another.[16] We need not discuss here to what extent this view is correct in its generalization. The point we have to grasp is that a poet has to be in harmony with the world of ideas as well as that of perception, and what is more important, he should be able to feel that ideas are concrete and perceptible, that they can arouse emotions. When a poet sees ideas not as shadowless abstractions but as living objects, he can, with the help of words, convey this sense of vitality to the readers. But thoughts or philosophical ideas, we should reiterate, are or can only be objects of poetry, and as such, says Valéry, means and not the end of expression, "des moyens qui concourent *également* avec les sons, les cadences, le nombre et les ornements, à provoquer, à soutenir une certaine tension ou exaltation, à engendrer en nous un *monde*—ou une *mode d'existence*—tout harmonique"[17].

Ideas, according to Valéry, are means which help to create the poetical world. But how do these means work? A philosophical idea which is not an

abstract speculation in the void, which is founded on a real experience, be it sensual, intellectual, mystic or religious, is bound to have repercussions on the human life in one way or another. For it brings forward to the intellect a truth which lay hidden in the life of a people. And the power of these ideas and ideals which affects the discerning intellect of a people does not remain limited to the intellect alone, but gradually "affects, enlarges and strengthens man's aesthetic outlook upon the world. The sensuous world becomes fuller of beauty, richer in colours, shades and suggestions, more profound and attractive in each widening of the human ideal"[18].

In most of the world's great poetry we find this interpenetration of the speculative genius and the imaginative genius. But speculation here is not reason. It is a part of the poet's world which he has to transmute imaginatively. Reason is incapable of any alchemy. Imagination ferments reality, but "reason", as Saint-Pol Roux very graphically puts it, "is imagination gone stale"[19].

The philosophical idea of the poet is not born of any rational faculty; even when the poet accepts a philosophy it is only to retain from it the large intutions which confirm his own vision of God, nature and man. The creative imagination, *pratibhā*, of the poet seizes upon these intuitions and clothes them in forms of beauty. It is consequently not required of a poet to have an original philosophy or an intellectual message for humanity. Truth is one and eternal. But various are its expressions. The Hindu believes that Truth can only be arrived at by intuition, by a process of identification with the real self–Existent. Even philosophy, if it is to be true revelation of the Real and not just an intellectual speculation in the rarified air of abstractions, has to be founded solidly upon some spiritual and mystical experience of that One Truth. Poetry too, whose highest aim it was to express the same Truth in its aspect of delight, *ānanda*, looked at the world with the inner eye of imagination, *pratibhā*, which is the power, *śakti*, disclosing the hidden splendours of existence. Thus we may say in the words of Gonda, "...it may be maintained that the creation of the artist, on the one hand, expressed the ideally conceived and mentally intuitive significance of the deity and, on the other hand, his creations were a part of his own personality as manifested in thoughts, volitions and emotions."[20]

In ancient Indian thought we find often the two words, poet and thinker, *kavi* and *manīṣin*, coupled together. A poet sees the truth in all its aspects, in manifestation as well as in essence; his wide vision embraces it in its totality as expressed in the Vast, in the created universe. But the thinker

grasps truth only in its partial manifestations and from there labours to find a more comprehensive view of it. "There is", says Sri Aurobindo, "a clear distinction in Vedic thought between *kavi*, the seer and *manīṣī*, the thinker. The former indicaters the divine supra-intellectual knowledge which by direct vision and illumination sees the reality, the principles and the forms of things in their true relations, the latter, the labouring mentality, which works from divided consciousness through the possibilities of things downward to the actual manifestation in form and upward to their reality in the self-existent Brahman."[21]

Though poetic vision and philosophical speculation are two distinct faculties, yet they can and do co-exist within the poet's mind. Poetry and philosophy are but two different ways of expressing the same truth; the former appeals primarily to the intuitive and emotive being of man, the latter primarily to the intellectual being.

This leads us to the problem of knowledge. Poetry, we have noted, like philosophy reveals the truth of existence. But how does it do this? What is the difference between poetic knowledge and philosophic knowledge? The understanding in poetry is other than rational apprehension. One does not here try to analyse, weigh, judge, nor make classifications and abstract generalizations. Poetic knowledge, writes Onimus, "se contente d'exprimer (...) la rencontre de la conscience avec le monde et, à travers le monde, avec elle-même: elle est l'existence qui s'appréhende et se met en images, en formes, en musique, ou en vers, ou en mots. Elle n'explique rien; elle passe au-dessous de la science et même de la métaphysique et de toutes les théologies"[22].

Poetic knowledge is a return of the consciousness back to itself after having journeyed through its manifold expressions in the world. In the terms of the Vedānta we can say that poetic knowledge is like the out-going of *ātman*, Spirit, into Nature, and returning to its self-poised status in which now it sees not only the Unity but also the Multiplicity of the phenomenal world full of colour and rhythm expressing the delight of existence and the great cosmic play. And for poetry, these expressions are forms, rhythms, symbols, alliterations, musical modulations. Poetry expresses the joy of the Real, of *Brahman*. Words and mind, says a seer, cannot grasp that delight, and come back defeated. *vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha*[23]. Words, as we ordinarily use them, are bearers of notions, are hand-maids of the mind. As the Real is beyond mind, words are unable to grasp the truth of the Real. But when the idea-bearing words are infused with poetic life, poetic vision, when they no longer represent "concepts" they become fuller with the many-

facetted truth of existence, they become "presence", they embody truth as delight, *brahman* as *ānanda*. Then the meaning makes itself known through the sheer joy of being. "La connaissance poétique, elle, se découvre dans l'acte même d'exister."[24]

Such is then the relation between philosophical ideas and poetry: poetry transsubstantiates ideas into forms of beauty through which we commune directly with the Truth that lies behind the ideas. We shall try and get some insight into this process of transmutation by studying one of the most beautiful poems in Sanskrit literature, Kālidāsa's *Kumārasaṃbhava* (*KS.*), "The Birth of Kumāra".

Kālidāsa lived during a period when the cultural sphere of India had reached a high maturity in life and an opulent splendour of expression. Not only "order had been restored to a troubled earth"[25], but also that order procured a background for the all-round cultural activities and a free and harmonious development of thought, beauty and joy of living. There was a free enjoyment of life, rich expressions of beauty in painting, sculpture, architecture, music, drama; development of the body and exploration of the physical enjoyment of the world; development too of the intellect. Religion, the fountain-head of Indian culture, penetrated more profoundly into the general pattern of life, passing from the lofty peaks of Upaniṣadic visions to the religion of the Purāṇa and the Tantra, which though in some sense less intense, was yet more easily accessible to the general understanding. And the ideal was to perfect all the parts of one's being in order to be able to express the religious ideas, devotion and fervour in life, mind and body. Kālidāsa writes that the body indeed is of foremost importance to the practice of religion :

śarīram ādyaṃ khalu dharma-sādhanam (*KS.* 5.33)

The whole age was marked by a tendency of expansion in all domains—intellectual, religious, aesthetic. It seems that the highest pre-occupation was the aesthetic enjoyment of all the various facets of life. Philosophy was enjoyed for the beauty of ideas, religion was practised for the delight of love and devotion, even difficult austerities were practised in order to enjoy the beauty of the Spirit. This does not mean that in India, at the time of Kālidāsa, there was no exclusive turning towards monasticism and ascetism, towards the negation of life and body; these and also a growing intellectualism and pedantry, a tendency towards codification and fixing of truths were no doubt present, but the ideal on which Kālidāsa himself lays emphasis in his poems and plays, is not that of a world-renouncing ascetic—*saṃnyāsa*—, renunciation

was put up as the ideal only at the end of one's life—, but that of a man accomplished in all the learnings of the day, possessing a high-strung intellect able to grasp if not intuitively, at least by an intellectual sympathy, the truths revealed to the seers of old.

It is true that we cannot give a very precise account of the age of Kālidāsa; history has failed to throw light on many obscurities about him; we are not even sure of his date, we know nothing about his life. A rich legend has grown around him which complicates the issue rather than clarifies it. We know that a work of art does not grow in a cultural void and that it reflects much that is real; therefore, from the study of poetical works we can draw a fairly clear picture of the poet's age. For our purpose, however, we need only to rememher that the age of Kālidāsa was intellectually and aesthetically a most splendid period of Indian culture. The spiritual, religious and moral urges are there, but somewhat withdrawn to the background though always throwing their shadow on all the activities of life.

It is in such an atmosphere that Kālidāsa lived and wrote. He did not, like the earlier Vedic poets, explore intuitively the mysteries of Godhead hidden in nature and man. Neither did he like Yajñavalkya, Naçiketas, Bhṛgu, Uddālaka and other great Upaniṣadic sages soar to the strange heights of thought defying all dangers, fearing nothing. But he had the capacity to appreciate those thoughts and intuitions and assimilate them imaginatively and draw out of them substance of his poetry. He knew all that was worth knowing: it was a part of the poet's education; but what he alone had at the highest degree and others did not, is the poetic faculty of sight. "In continuous gift of seizing an object", says Sri Aurobindo, "and creating it to the eye, he has no rival in literature."[26] For Kālidāsa as for all poets, "object" does not mean only a physical object but ideas, visions, feelings, emotions and sensations. This faculty of image-making, of metaphorisation, was already recognized long ago by the Indian critics when they spoke of Kālidāsa's images: *upamā Kālidāsasya.*

The object we propose in this present essay is not to study the imaginative or image-making faculty of the poet; we want to see how some philosophical ideas have been transmuted and poeticized.

We have seven works of Kālidāsa: three plays, two shorter poems, and two literary epics or *mahākāvya*-s. Of these two epics, *Kumārasaṃbhava* is the earlier, a work perhaps of his early manhood. *Raghuvaṃśa*, "The Dynasty of Raghu", is a work of his full maturity. Keith, like almost all other historians of Sanskrit literature, recognizes the presence of philosophical ideas in his

works, but he writes, "Youth and manhood are no time for deep philosophic views and the Kālidāsa of the *Ṛtusaṃhāra*, *Meghadūta* and *Kumārasaṃbhava* remains within narrower limits."[27] According to him, the philosophic views of Kālidāsa find fullest expression in the later *kāvya*, the *Raghuvaṃśa*.

It is doubtful whether one can possibly back up such a statement. When we compare the two epics we find that, from the point of view of philosophy, they are complementary. In fact, the first has more pure philosophy, for through characters, imagery and symbolism, Kālidāsa holds up a speculative interpretation of existence, the fundamentals of the Vedānta, the Sāṃkhya and the Yoga philosophies, transmuted into the substance of poetry. Whereas in the latter it is rather an ethico-religious interpretation of life. Behind both the poems there is the same philosophic world from which the poet draws his idea-objects but he puts them into different use in the different poems. Every artist has a vast thought-world out of which he selects his material for creation. Even when the thoughts are the same, the ways of expressing them vary with every artist. One of the most complex and comprehensive ways is that of *KS.*, in which, if the reader is not alert and sensitive enough, he will fail to grasp the ideas and may consider the poem as an expression only of sensuous beauty.

Here all the idea-units are changed into concrete objects, into symbols. In this transformation the poet has the help of mythology and metaphors. In order to understand better this transformation we shall at first consider some other means by which philosophical ideas can be transmuted into poetry.

Philosophical ideas become poetic, in the first place by the manner in which they are presented. It is now a truism to say that poetry cannot be paraphrased. When this innocent operation is performed on a poem, the result is a dead meaning, and also just one meaning, for then the many-sided expression is reduced to prose which communicates things only lineally. An idea has to be a real presence[28] in the mind of the writer, so that the sense of reality breaks dynamically through every word, giving life-breath to the abstract meaning that a word primarily denotes. One can feel that there is no real presence, "présence réelle", in the mind of those who are perhaps great scholars and thinkers but not poets, "*rien qu'à la façon dont ils en parlent*, qu'à la façon dont ils manipulent cette notion"[29].

We can take a few examqles from Western literature which will perhaps be more accessible to the modern reader. When Shelley writes :

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity.

we grasp in these lines not only the intellectual expression of Platonism, expression similar to the lofty Vedic notion, *ekaṃ sat viprā bahudhā vadanti*, one Pure Existence which the wise call by many names,—but the notion becomes a living presence, we not only understand, but see and feel. Not only is our mind gratified but our heart and sensations experience the thrill of delight. If we analyse the lines we find that the impression is created mainly by metaphorical expressions, by the rhythmical pattern, the subtly modulated alliterations and rhymes which seem to break up the light and scatter it to illumine the many faces of nature. The first line is a propositional statement and taken separately would lose much of its strength. It is surely a very forceful enunciation but if it were not sustained by the following lines, the idea would hardly have been vitally expressive.

The statement can also come at the end of a poetic passage in which the poet gradually rises towards a climax, preparing the way for a bare summit of expression where the idea does not need any rhetorical device. Such is, for example, the small poem of Yves Bonnefoy of which I give the last five lines :

Ruiner la face nue qui monte dans le marbre,
Marteler toute forme toute beauté.
Aimer la perfection parce qu'elle est le seuil,
Mais la nier sitôt connue, l'oublier morte,
L'imperfection est la cime.

(Hier Régnant Désert)

The poet here, by the process of constant negation, negation of all beauty, which however he does with the help of beautiful poetic images, arrive at the last bareness of expression[30].

Detached from their context many such lines would lose much of their poetic value. It is the whole context of the *Divine Comedy* that makes the power of the line :

En la sua volontade è nostra pace.

This poetic transformation can be called the Upaniṣadic manner; in the Upaniṣad too we find lofty bare ideas expressed directly in vigorous rhythmic patterns, illumining sometimes the ideas with brief powerful images.

All these instances show how some ideas are poeticized. But the range of these ideas is rather restricted. We should see how a philosophical vision with a larger, more sustained scope can be worked out poetically. Mounin calls Valéry's ***La Jeune Parque***, a Bergsonian allegory, "une allégorie bergsonienne"[31]. We should, however, note that this allegory is not the "cold allegory" but rather what we have named "symbol"[32].

Valéry once wrote, "La littérature n'est rien de désirable si elle n'est un exercice supérieur de l'animal intellectuel.

"Il faut donc qu'elle comporte l'emploi de toutes les fonctions mentales de cet animal . . ."[33]

In the first sentence we come very close to the ideas of Sanskrit rhetoricians about poetic creation. What Valéry calls higher intellectual exercises was denoted by the terms *vyutpatti* and *abhyāsa*, the first term meant a deep intellectual culture, a knowledge and critical discrimination, the second a constant poetic practice for mastering the art of poetry. The Indian critics however put *pratibhā*, creative imagination, as the primary requisite. Valéry was loth to accept any such faculty, but in his writings we still find recognition of a certain kind of inspiration as the prime mover in poetry. In fact, often when he speaks of mental activities he includes within the notion such faculties as the Bergsonian intuition. "Intelligence" is not normally a giver of sweetness, yet for Valéry it is the matrix from which all sweetness flows :

–O ma mère Intelligence,
De qui la douceur coulait,...

(Poésie)

In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* it is said that the sun is the honey of the gods,

asau vā ādityo deva-madhu (3.1.1.)

What is the sun if not the power of illumination, of poetic vision ? Therefore, it would seem that what Valéry means by Intelligence is in reality the power of vision, of intuitive seeing. The inherent power of poetry does not lie in the intellect but in sight. And it is only when a poet is able to "see" ideas that he can draw from them the honey of poetic charm.

The *Jeune Parque* shows us how Valéry has transmuted concepts of philosophy into poetry. Here we find a mythological figure through which ideas are changed into symbols. Marcel Raymond, commenting on this

poem says[34] that we see here a figure half-girl half-goddess walking down to the sea. "La mer", explains Raymond", symbolise (...) le mouvement, la vie inconsciente et créatrice; elle symbolise aussi l'âme, vivante, désirante, obscure, informe."[35] It does not fall within the purview of our study to analyse the whole poem. We shall only say that Valéry has changed into concrete symbols the different elements of the philosophy; the poem is, therefore, not versified philosophy, it is symbolic; in it every object, every metaphor creates to the eye what would otherwise remain abstractions only.

There is no metaphysical pose; everything is objet, concrete, palpable; but these objects are fraught with suggestive evocations. We can again quote Marcel Raymond who has caught very clearly the spirit of this symbolical transmutation :

"Etranger à tout didactisme, jamais le vers ne se laisse dépouiller de sa pulpe, ne se laisse *traduire*. Le poème entier invite à la réflexion philosophique, sans cesser de cheminer dans le clair-obscur des images et de la musique, sans jamais perdre contact avec les sources qui l'animent et sans briser les doux liens de sang qui le tiennent suspendu."[36]

When a poet has been able to perform in his poem a synthesis of thought and life, or rather when thought itself comes clothed in flesh, colour, beauty, charm, vitality, we can speak of the symbolic transmutation. Kālidāsa's method is similar, though we should note some fundamental differences. Kālidāsa, like Valéry, was certainly a conscious artist; he was aware of the task he had undertaken. But we find, because of the very nature of his poem, narrative passages which fall outside the scope of the transmutation. There are also some passages of mythological and religious interest which, while having no immediate relation to the philosophy yet can quicken the mood of the reader if he is in sympathy with those views, as the Indian readers of Kālidāsa mostly are. But when one does not have sympathy with this mythology and religion, these can be impediments to the proper appreciation of the poem. Thirdly, like all classical Sanskrit poets, Kālidāsa too is fond of pithy sayings, and these, though they embody ideas, do not fall within the scope of the process of transmutation we are speaking of.

When the gods sing the praise of Brahmā, the Creator, the words express a philosophy in philosophic terms; the style is always chaste; ideas are expressed clearly and succinctly; the reader has no difficulty in understanding what they mean; but they do not rise to the height of poetical expression; the light of Imagination, *pratibhā*, does not burst out in many-splendoured glory through the verses.

jagad-yonir ayonis tvaṃ jagad-anto nirantakaḥ |
jagad-ādir anādis tvaṃ jagad-īśo nirīśvaraḥ ||
ātmānam ātmanā vetsi sṛjasy ātmānam ātmanā |
ātmanā kṛtinā ca tvam ātmany eva pralīyase ||
(*KS*. 2.9-10)

Without origin, you are the world's origin, without end the world's end; without beginning you are the world's beginning, without a master, you are the master of the world. You know yourself by the Self, create yourself by the Self; and by the power of the Self you are absorbed in yourself.

Kālidāsa is not a mystic poet; he is the poet of thought and imagination and sensuousness; from the above quotation we find that he had intellectual sympathy with the philosophy that is expressed; he did not have the mystic's fervour.

Mysticism in poetry is a later development which has got its highest expression not in Sanskrit but in modern Indian languages, in the songs of poet-saints like Kabīr, Sūrdās, Caṇḍīdās etc. "The religious poetry of the later Indian tongues", writes Sri Aurobindo, "has for us fervours of poetic revelation which in the great classics are absent, even though no mediaeval poet can rank in power with Vālmīki and Kālidāsa."[37]

The opinion that the poem "can be considered, in some respects, as a religious work, a glorification of Śiva"[38] is hardly tenable. We miss the fervour of religious sentiment without which religious poetry cannot exist. It is true that Śiva, the hero of the poem, is one of the most adored godheads in the Hindu pantheon and Kālidāsa was a Śiva-worshipper, most probably as an inheritance of the family-tradition, but nowhere in his poetry do we come across an ardent religious yearning. The glorification of Śiva, even if we use this term in respect of *KS*., is nothing more than what one would find in the Purāṇic tradition[39]. It will perhaps be nearer the truth to say that in Kālidāsa's philosopoical vision God and nature and man were such as would prompt him to resort to the myth of Śiva and Pārvatī. Here was a mythical story in which the personification of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* was already established. We shall understand the choice of the theme if we consider that even in the Gītā we have the personification and poetization of *Puruṣa* alone in the person of Kṛṣṇa; *Prakṛti* is still an abstract idea.

We can safely maintain that Kālidāsa did not have the devout feelings of a religious poet. Neither did he have the strength of original intuition

which makes some passages of the Upaniṣad supremely poetic. In the Upaniṣad philosophy and poetry are still two sides of the same truth-vision; philosophy is there only partially free from poetry. Therefore, we find passages which are at once poetry and philosophy; speculation and imagination go hand in hand.

hiraṇmayena pātreṇa satyasyāpihitam mukham |
tat tvaṃ pūṣan apāvṛṇu satya-dharmāya dṛṣṭaye ||
(*Īśa*, 15)

The face of truth is covered with a golden lid.
Remove it, O Fosterer–Sun, for the law of the truth, for vision.

The language is clearly poetic. The thought–material can not easily be separated from the symbolism. It is only when we recognize that the sun is not just the physical luminary but the concrete representation of the phenomenon of mystic illumination, or poetic revelation, when we feel that the golden lid is perhaps the highest human concept, religious and metaphysical, beyond which mind cannot reach, then only the speculative aspect becomes apparent. Yet the idea is hinted at by such expressions as *satya-dharma.* But in a passage such as :

aṇor aṇīyān mahato mahīyān ātmāsya jantor nihito guhāyām|
(*Kaṭha*, 1.2.20)

Smaller than the small, greater than the great, the Self is seated in the (heart-) cavern of the creature,

the philosophical element is more in the front but the poetic tone is still sufficiently strong to touch our aesthetic sense along with the intellectual. But the passage we have quoted from Kālidāsa remains a well-turned philosophical idea like the couplets of Alexander Pope[40]. In Kālidāsa's poem there is much that is purely mythologieal narrative, much that is philosophical or religious ideas put into chaste verse. From the standpoint of pure poetry these things will appear as dross, as unnecessary intellectual and narrative padding, but whereas Valéry's poem is a lyric, Kālidāsa's is an epic; —in order to ensure the flow of the story these superfluities were indispensable. If we leave such passages aside, what we have is poetry, concrete and evocative to the highest degree. Philosophy is there, pervading the whole poem, but ideas have become objects whose touch, music, colour do thrill and enchant the reader. What Raymond says about Valéry applies to Kālidāsa without much modification. "C'est le sentiment du concret psychologique, en relation avec un sens infiniment subtil du poids, de la couleur, des vertus

extra-intellectuelles des vocables, qui lui permet de faire passer dans ses vers, (...) cette saveur et cette vibration secreète qui procurent au lecteur, avant même que son intelligence ait eu le temps de s'interroger, une commotion et un plaisir poétique immédiats."[41]

In Kālidāsa's poetry many a reader feels the underlying thinking, a substratum of philosophical ideas, but the immediacy of the poetic shock and pleasure moves him so profoundly that he has neither time nor inclination to examine the poem intellectually. However, we feel that an exploration into the world of ideas which were at the base of the poetic structure as influences will not hinder our appreciation; it will add a new dimension, even if that be only an intellectual dimension, to our approach.

We believe that poetry is not just a "criticism of life", a philophical view enunciated as poetically as possible, but rather the seizing of the "presence" that is there at the origin of all "concepts".

It is undeniable that we shall never be able to write the history of the poet's mind,—a complex world peopled by various ideas, beliefs, impressions, sometimes coordinated, sometimes living disparately. In poetry only a small portion of that world is revealed in the form of images, thoughts and sensations. It has been asserted by some critics that a work of art could be fully explained, or even explained away, if we could find out what books the poet read, who his teachers were, what religious beliefs he held...But fortunately this view of poetic determinism has lost much of its vigour in the present century.

Poetry has a manner of its own for assimilating and transmuting experiences, teachings, sensations which the mind receives. We shall try to unravel some of the philosophical ideas that seem to have marked Kālidāsa's poetry. He was, besides being a poet, a thinker, not one who breaks down truth into analytical notions which are then organized as an intellectual and logically ordered system, but one in whose mind thoughts become symbols.

In the next chapter we shall show how from the substratum of thought rise symbols which are not counters of ideas but genuine poetic expressions full of colour and music, splendidly sensuous. Poetry possesses an immediacy of language which is the power to evoke the Real experienced by the poet. The cxperience may be absolutely unique or it may have support and justification in some philosophy, mythology, science, mysticism or religion. In modern poetry there is a marked partiality for the unforeseen. It is often difficult to say how far the experience is unusual and unique and how far it is

the unusual expression which gives such an impression. In classical Sanskrit poetry there was not much scope for technical innovations and experimentations. Neither did Kālidāsa want to give us a new philosophy. It is therefore nothing really unforeseen which we undertake to discover. Our endeavour will be to explore those ideas belonging to the poet's mental world which have influenced the poem and made it what it really is.

REFERENCES

1. "I filosofi, i nemici naturali dei poeti.. ." Salvatore Quasimodo, *Tutte le poesie*, p. 255.
2. See, Michael Hamburger, *The Truth af Poetry*, p. 14.
3. 3ri Aurobindo, *The Future Poetry*, p. 30.
4. "une recherche d'intelligibilité". Didier Julia, *Dictionnaire de la philosophie*, p. 231.
5. "une recherche morale, celle de notre destination véritable, et (. . .) un apprentissage de la vertu". *ibid.*, 231.
6. "une réflexion sur les expériences réelles de la conscience humaine (...) son objet final est bien de dégager le sens de ces expériences". *ibid.*, pp. 231-2
7. *Kāvyamīmāṃsā*, Chapter 2. See also the editor's commentary, p. 135.
8. Krishna Chaitanya, *Sanskrit Poetics*, p. 164.
9. "Poetry for Poetry's Sake", *Oxford Lectures on Poetry*, qu. Krishna Caitanya, *op. cit.*, p. 282.
10. Susanne K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, pp. 33-53.
11. Georges Cattaui, *Orphisme et prophétie*, p. 12.
12. "Ideas and Literature", in : *Comparative Literature*, p. 117.
13. René Wellek and Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature*, pp. 110-11.
14. Sri Aurobindo, "*The Sources of Poetry*", p. 106.
15. Newton P. Stallknecht, *Comparative Literature*, p. 126.
16. "La plupart de nos contemporains pensent dans un monde et sentent dans un autre". Georges Mounin, *La Communication poétique*, p. 191.
17. Paul Valéry, *Variété*, p. 1503.
18. Sri Aurobindo, *Kālidāsa*, p. 299.
19. See, Michael Hamburger, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
20. J. Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, p. 63.
21. Sri Aurobindo, *Īsha Upanishad*, p. 65 fn.
22. Jean Onimus, *La Connaissance poétique*, p. 16.
23. *Taittirīya-Upaniṣad*, II.9.
24. Jean Onimus, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
25. A. B. Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 98.
26. Sri Aurobindo, *Kālidāsa*, p. 223.
27. A. B. Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
28. Consider the distinction Yves Bonnefoy makes between "concept" and "présence", "Les tombeaux de Ravenne", in : *L'Improbable*, pp. 11-34.

29. Georges Mounin, *op. cit.*, p. 192. In this context Mounin has mentioned specifically the notion of God, but this is true for all notions which are not to remain only as precise abstractions but to become vitally existent. Thus it is that the highest mystical and religious expressions are always poetical.

30. This poetic process can be compared to the method of progressive negation, *neti neti*, "not this, not this", (*BAU*.IV.2,4) which is used by some seekers of the *brahman*. Negating gradually the multiplicity of the phenomenal world the seeker attains to the knowledge of the Absolute, *tat sat*, that Existent. Poetically, we may say that the last line is as bare, as attributeless as the *brahman*. But philosophically there is a great difference. The experience of the *brahman* is positive; it is the supreme projection beyond perfections and imperfections. But Bonnefoy rejects the phenomenal perfections and does not arrive anywhere. The eternity here is the eternity of seeking, not of attaining.

31. Georges Mounin, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

32. See, Ranajit Sarkar, *Gītagovinda*, pp. 4-5, and *La Poétique de Sri Aurobindo*, pp. 149-51.

33. Paul Valéry, *Rhumbs*, p. 633.

34. Marcel Raymond, *De Baudelaire au Surréalisme*, p. 163.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 163. On this subject one will read with profit pp. 157-169.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

37. Sri Aurobindo, *The Future Poetry*, p. 36.

38. "Le poème qu'on peut considérer à certains égards comme une oeuvre religieuse, une glorification de Śiva". Louis Renou, in : *L'Inde classique*, Tome II, pp. 210-11.

39. The most elaborate version is found in the *Śiva-purāṇa*, but it is certain that this *purāṇa* is later than *Kālidāsa* and follows Kālidāsa quite closely in its narration. Although the composition of this and other *purāṇa* is comparatively recent, yet it is now universally agreed that the substance existed at a much earlier date.

40. Such a poet is termed by Rājaśekhara as *śāstrārtha kavi*, *KM*. Chapter 5.

41. Marcel Raymond, *op. cit.*, pp. 115-6. If these lines were not written by a modern European critic in relation to Valéry, many positivist minds, I am afraid, would have taken them as an unrestrained expression of the Oriental love for mystification and of primitive beliefs in such occult phenomena as "extra-intellectual virtue of vocables" which in Sanskrit would be equivalent to the power of *mantra*, and "the taste and secret vibration" which would point to the two concepts of *rasa* and *dhvani*.

CHAPTER II

THE ETERNAL PLAN

It wc look for a water-tight philosophical system in any poetry, we are bound to fail. In Kālidāsa too, it is not a system that we are investigating, but philosophical ideas. His poetic vision has a definite philosophical substratum which certainly does not correspond to any of the six orthodox Hindu systems which were perhaps fixed and codified not long before his time. But though many ideas of these later philosophies pierce through his poetry and plays, yet it is the earlier philosophies of the Upaniṣad and the *Gitā* that will give us a better understanding of this substratum. The cosmological order is that of the Veda and the Upaniṣad; the Vedānta and the Sāṃkhya ideas are those of the Upaniṣad and the *Mahābhārata*. And the psycho-spiritual concepts of God-seeking, of living religious yearning, are those of the *bhakti-yoga* as we find them in the *Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad* and the *Gitā*, as well as those that were fast developing in the emotional religion of the Śaiva and the Vaiṣṇava, especially in the Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa in which the relation between the human soul and God was typified by the passion of a woman for her lover. This relation was not limited only to the emotional world, but was concretized in the symbols and rituals related to the physical sexual union. The works of Tantra which deal with these practices and symbolisms are of a later date but we may assume that among the Śaiva this had already a long history. Says Sri Aurobindo, "...the concretisation of the idea of Puruṣa-Prakṛti, the union of Īśvara and Śakti, from which it arose, was already there in the symbolic legends of the Purāṇas and one of these is the subject of Kālidāsa's greatest epic poem.[1] ...The central idea of this great unfinished poem, the marriage of Śiva and Pārvati, typified in its original idea the union of Puruṣa and Prakṛti, the supreme Soul and dynamic Nature by which the world is created; but this type of divine legend was used esoterically to typify also the Nature-Soul's search for and the attainment of God and something of this conception pierces through the description of Pārvatī seeking after Śiva."[2]

When we read carefully the poem with a certain sympathetic understanding of the Indian thought-world, these ideas expressed by Sri Aurobindo appear to be true. But when we try to disentangle the thoughts from the poetry, we find the process extremely difficult. For, the structure of the poem is very complex; the poem unfolds itself on different levels. On the mythological narrative level we have a simple story of the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī. This surface meaning is evident. And though it is beautifully narrated we cannot remain satisfied only with this. It is the total structure which we have to explore; and this structure, we believe, is an orchestration of several themes, out of which stands central the theme of *Puruṣa-Prakṛti.*

I should like to add, at this stage, that our aim is not to look for the so-called "sources" of *KS* : eminent scholars have shown the parallelisms between verses of Kālidāsa and works the poet had most certainly read. It has been shown that he had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the different sciences, of grammar and poetics, of astronomy, of religious, political and philosophic treatises. Giuseppe Tucci lays special emphasis on the influence of the Sāṃkhya : especially the Sāṃkhya of the epic period, as expressed in the *Mokṣadharma* and the *Bhagavadgītā.* Tucci further notes that the Sāṃkhya ideas are also largely present in various Upaniṣad and the treatise of Manu, works which Kālidāsa knew extremely well; these are present too in the vast Purāṇic literature, part of which was composed in its definitive form around the age of Kālidāsa. The passages which embody clear philosophical doctrines are mostly of Sāṃkhya inspiration, but it is the theistic Sāṃkhya, "il Sāṃkhya teistico" of the epic and the Purāṇa.[3]

However, as we are not particularly concerned with the express philosophy of the poet, this kind of traditional study of sources is of interest to us only in so far as it lends support to our present investigation concerning the orchestration of Kālidāsa's philosophical ideas.

A grand scope was needed for this orchestration; the Purāṇic story supplied the poet with that frame-work within which he could move at ease, passing freely from the world of gods to the world of men, from the individual to the universal, from the divided to the Absolute. In fact, we often find an interpenetration of the different planes, of which the most evident example is Himālaya who is at the same time a mythological figure and a mountain : the world-soul and the world-stage on which the divine drama is being enacted. In order to disentangle some of these trends and hidden meanings we shall begin with the study of the cosmic order which seems to me to be at the base of the whole poem.

One of the greatest ideas of the Upanisad is expressed by the formula, *sarvaṃ khalv idaṃ brahma,*[4] "all this indeed is the *Brahman*". What then is Brahman ? It is the Absolute, the Real, the origin of all things, *brahma va idam agra āsit ekam eva,*[5] "in the beginning all this was verily Brahman, the One alone. But in the process of creation the One became Many. *Brahman* which is attributeless cannot be an object of poetry ; words and mind return defeated without knowing that. But *Brahman* in manifestation is the source of all mental knowledge.

There are different ways by which the Indian mind has tried to express in words the fundamental idea which lies behind creation, and the primal manifestation of the Absolute in forms and names. As we are not here discussing the history of philosophical concepts we shall desist from a general consideration of this idea ; we shall only see that this idea corresponds most closely to that which we find in Kālidāsa's poem. In the *Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad* it is said that *Brahmaṅ* is *catus-pat,* fourfooted, i. e. has four statuses :

sarvam hy etad brahma ayam ātmā brahma so 'yam ātmā catus-pat (*Mā.* 2)

All this indeed is *Brahman.* This Self is *Brahman.* That which is this Self has four statuses.

These four statuses are respectively, 1. *Brahman*; 2. *Iśvara*; 3. *Hiraṇya-garbha*; 4. *Virāj.*

This is an ancient idea basic to the Indian thought which was already expressed in the *Ṛg-veda* (X, 90). The Absolute is there poetically represented as the Cosmic Man, *Puruṣa.*

puruṣa evedaṃ sarvaṃ yad bhutaṃ yac ca bhavyam

All this is the *Puruṣa,* that which has been and that which is to be.

In the same hymn it is said that he has four quarters, of which three are immortal in heaven, *tri-pad asya amṛtam divi,* and only one quarter is manifest as all creatures and things, *viśvā bhūtāni,* animate and inanimate, *sāśanānaśane.*[6] It is this last quarter which is the World, *Virāj,* that which we perceive in our waking state, with our senses and our mind.

Hiraṇya-garbha, the golden germ, is the World-Soul, that which sustains the world, the earth and the sky, *sa dādhāra pṛthiviṃ dyām* (*ṚV* X. 121. 1).

The third status is that of *Iśvara,* Lord, the Personal God, *saḥ,* He. In the Purāṇa it is he who assumes the names Śiva, Viṣṇu.

Finally we have the fourth status, *turiya,* which is the status of the undifferentiated *Brahman,* the Absolute, *tat,* That. Speaking of these four

statuses Radhakrishnan writes : "In many passages, the Upaniṣads make out that *Brahman* is pure being beyond all word and thought. He becomes *Iśvara* or personal God with the quality of *prajñā* or pure wisdom. He is all-knowing, the lord of the principle of *mūla-prakṛti* or the unmanifested, the inner guide of all souls. From him proceeds *Hiraṇya-garbha* who, as Demiurge, fashions the world. From the last develops *Virāt*[7] or the totality of all existents. The last two are sometimes mixed up."[8]

Whether Kālidāsa was intellectually aware of the fourfold distinction is of little relevance here. The ideas are there scattered all over the Vedic and the Upaniṣadic literature. When we read the cosmogonic hymns we find in the beginning *Brahman*, undifferentiated, unknowable. But for the purpose of creation we have the aspect of Brahman called differently Puruṣa, Prajāpati, *Hiraṇyagarbha*—the spirit of creation. And from this developed the visible world—*tasmād virad ajāyata virājo adhi puruṣaḥ* (*ṚV*. X. 90.5), "from him was born Virāj and from Virāj came Puruṣa". This shows the inter-dependance of the created world and the creator who, on one side, is the source of Virāj, on the other side the spirit inhabiting Virāj. We have then the original, transcendental *Brahman*, and the twin principle of *Hiraṇyagarbha* and Virāj.

As a votary of Rudra-Śiva, Kālidāsa must have been intensely attracted by the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*. This later Upaniṣad seems to be an attempt on the part of the Śaiva to exalt Rudra-Śiva as the Highest God, as well as to synthetize various philosophical views. What the Vaiṣṇavas have done in the *Gitā*, the Śaiva endeavoured to do here.[9] This is not the occasion to discuss thoroughly the possible influences that this Upaniṣad might have exercised on Kālidāsa; however we shall see several similarities between its views and his.

At this juncture, it is enough to note that the fourfold world-plan is quite clearly elaborated in this Upaniṣad :

udgitam etat paramaṃ tu brahma tasmiṃs trayaṃ (I. 7)

It has been sung as the supreme *Brahman*, in it are the three.

What are these three ? The answer is given in a further verse :

kṣaraṃ pradhānam, amṛtākṣaraṃ, Haraḥ ;
kṣarātmānāv iśate deva ekaḥ (I. 10)

The *pradhāna* (primal matter) which is mutable, the deathless immutable, and Hara ;
the One God governs the mutable and the (deathless) soul.

This *pradhāna* is Virāj, the world, the body of the One God, *deva ekaḥ*, seen as the world-maker, the universal artisan, Viśvakarman, about whom it is said in the *Ṛgveda* :

viśvataś-cakṣur uta viśvato-mukho
viśvato-bāhur uta viśvatas-pāt /
saṃ bāhubhyām dhamati saṃ patatrair
dhyāvā-bhūmī janayan deva ekaḥ // (*ṚV.* X. 81. 3)

The One God, his eyes everywhere, his face
everywhere, everywhere his arms
and legs, creates Heaven and Earth
and joins them together with arms and wings.

The fact that this Upaniṣad (III. 3) quotes this Ṛgvedic verse proves indubitably that in this passage it is Viśvakarman who is meant as the *amṛtākṣara*, which is the immortal soul of the universe, the creative form of the One God. The next verse makes clear that this is the same as *Hiraṇya-garbha* :

yo devānām prabhavaś codbhavaś ca
viśvādhipo Rudro maharṣiḥ /
Hiraṇyagarbhaṃ janayāmāsa pūrvaṃ... (III. 4)
He who is the matrix and the origin of
the gods, the lord of the universe, Rudra,
the supreme seer, aforetime gave birth
to *Hiraṇya-garbha*...

We shall now see how Kālidāsa has transmuted these ideas in KS. I shall deal with them under three headings : i. *Brahman* ; ii. *Hiraṇya-garbha* and *Virāj* ; iii. *Īśvara*. I take the aspect of *Īśvara* in the end because of its greatest importance, for *Īśvara* is Śiva, the principal hero of the poem. And along with him we will have to consider also the aspect of Pārvatī.

i. *Brahman*

The highest status of *Brahman*, which is beyond manifestation, beyond mind and speech, beyond time and space, cannot be caught in words, and has therefore little relevancy in poetry. The ancient sages have tried to give an idea of that Absolute in negative terms, endeavouring to arrive at the attributeless by the process of gradual elimination of all attributes. This is the *akṣara*, Imperishable of the Upaniṣad and the *Gītā*.

akṣaraṃ brahma paramam / (*Gītā*, VIII. 3)
The *akṣara*, imperishable, is the supreme *Brahman*.

And again :

"That, O Gārgī, the knowers of *Brahman* call the imperishable, *akṣara*", says Yājñavalkya, who tries to define It by a series of negations. "It is neither solid nor atomic, neither short nor tall, neither (fiery) red nor moist, It has no shadow, no darkness; It is neither air nor ether; It is without any attachment; It is without taste, without smell, without sight, without hearing, without speech, without mind, without lustre, without life-breath; It is faceless, immeasurable; It has no inside nor outside; neither does it enjoy anything nor does anyone enjoy It."[9]

If such is the notion of this *akṣara brahman*, immutable and attributeless, how can It be changed into poetry which is by definition a seeing, a concretization? Therefore, we find that Kālidāsa took the only course left to him : instead of the Vedāntic *Brahman* he has sung the praise of the Purāṇic Brahmā.

When a form and a name is given to the formless and the nameless we have no longer the same *Brahman*. No metaphorization or symbolization is here possible. We can symbolize only that which we are able to know. The knowledge may be mental, sensual or it may be mystic, extra-intellectual. But *Brahman* being unknowable in its *turīya*, fourth status, it is no use trying to symbolize It. As soon as we name It, we descend to a lower level of consciousness. The Hindu psychology has spoken of four states of Consciousness, which correspond to the four statuses of *Brahman* :

1. *jāgaraṇa* or *viśva*, the waking state, surface consciousness with its sense-organs, mind and intellect. In this state we can have the knowledge of the Real in its outward manifestation, as the World, Virāj;

2. *svapna* or *taijasa*, dream-state, subconscient or subliminal consciousness. In this state we cognize the inner objects in the cosmic world-soul, *Hiraṇya-garbha*;

3. *suṣupti* or *prajñā*, the state of dreamless sleep, super-conscient, in which we can know *Brahman* as *Īśvara*, God, the Person;

4. *turīya*, the fourth state. It is thus called because it cannot be described. It is beyond even the superconscient. The *Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad* (Mā. 7) tries mostly negatively to give some idea of this :

> "unseen, incommunicable, unseizable, featureless, unthinkable, and unnameable; Essence of the knowledge of the Unique Self, Repose of the phenomenal world; the Calm, the Good, the Nondual."[10]

This status is beyond the grasp of human knowledge and therefore Kālidāsa takes Brahmā to represent the highest status; this he does by proclaiming him as the origin of all the other statuses. He is *Īśvara*, the Lord of the world, but he has no lord above him : *jagad-īśo nirīśvaraḥ* (2. 9) he is also *Hiraṇya-garbha*; from his infallible seed cast in the womb of the primordial waters the phenomenal world is born; he is the source and origin of the world.

yad amogham apām antar uptaṃ bījam aja tvayā |
ataś carācaraṃ viśvaṃ prabhavas tasya gīyase ||
2. 5

You cast, O the Unborn One, your supremely potent seed in the womb of the waters; from there arose the world of moving and unmoving objects; of all that you are proclaimed the Source.

He is also the origin of humanity; Man and Woman are portions of himself, *ātma-bhāgau* (2, 7), he is all the elements, fluid and solid, gross and subtle, light and heavy (2, 11); he is *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*, Spirit and Nature (2, 13).

Kālidāsa speaks therefore in terms of religion and mythology about That, *tat*, which is beyond speech, mind, mystic or poetic intuition. Here the transmutation is not poetic, and not something Kālidāsa has imagined; it is the general Purāṇic notion of the creator, Brahmā, which he has taken wholesale. Although there is hardly any poetic invention or creative imagination at work here, it fulfils an artistic purpose : it gives perfection to the fourfold divine plan. Kālidāsa was, however, not unaware that what he was doing was just the only option which his creative mind could grasp for the fulfilment of the poetic purpose.

Kālidāsa knows that this form is that which *Brahman* has assumed after creation; before the creation Brahmā was the Unique : *prāk-sṛṣṭeḥ kevalātmane*, "to the Absolute Self before creation".[11]

We have already seen the impossibility of expressing in words the *akṣara*. But once we have noted that this idea which, if eliminated altogether from the poem, would have been a blemish on the perfect structure we understand why Kālidāsa gives so much space to the Purāṇic Brahmā; this, we should notice, is a make-shift.[13] Kālidāsa mentions the word *Brahman* once in the poem[14] in the sense of the *akṣara* in relation to the Personal God, Śiva.

sa......brahmaṇi yojitātmā |
3. 15

he (Śiva) whose Self is fixed on *Brahman*.

Here we see that the poet makes a difference between *Īśvara* and *Brahman*; and this *Brahman* who is above *Īśvara* is the Supreme Absolute, the fourth, *turiya*, status.

But we find that Śiva is placed above Brahmā and Viṣṇu. Brahmā says of Śiva :

sa hi devaḥ paraṃ jyotis tamaḥ-pāre vyavasthitam |
paricchinna-prabhāvarddhir na mayā na ca Viṣṇunā ||
2. 58

For, this God is the supreme light fixed beyond darkness; neither I nor Viṣṇu can encompass the extent of his glory.

This is not, as it has often been maintained, just a sectarian glorification of Śiva; here we find that Śiva is the Supreme Person beyond *Brahman*. As in the Gītā we have the notion of *Puruṣottama*, the Highest Person, above even the immutable *Brahman*, we have here Śiva as that *Puruṣottama*. Later, we shall have the opportunity to speak more about this aspect of *Īśvara*.

However, when we study the statuses of *Hiraṇya-grabha*, *Virāj* and *Īśvara*, which are fully concretized we will better understand the place of the *akṣara brahman* as *Brahmā* in the poem.

ii. *Hiraṇya-garbha* and *Virāj*

We now come to the double-status of the world and the world-soul, *Virāj* and *Hiraṇya-garbha*, which are, as we have noted, sometimes mixed up.[15] In Kālidāsa's poem too we find that the poet has very skilfully represented these two aspects as a homogenous whole in his conception of *Himālaya*. The very first verse leaves no doubt whatsoever about this universal double aspect. *Himālaya* is the world in which the divine play is to be enacted and is also represented as a sentient being, as the divinity hidden in the world.

asty uttarasyāṃ diśi devatātmā,
Himālayo nāma nagādhirājaḥ |
pūrvāparau toya-nidhī vagāhya,
sthitaḥ pṛthivyā iva māna-daṇḍaḥ ||
1. 1

In the North stands the god-souled *Himālaya*, sovereign over the Mountains; lain down, his sides bathed in the eastern and the western seas he appears to measure the earth.

The cosmic dimensions that the poet gives to the mountain-range indicates that it is not just a portion of the world but the world itself. And *Himālaya* has a self which is divine, *devatātmā*, god-souled; when personified he becomes the world-soul. He is elsewhere compared to Viṣṇu who covered the whole universe with his three steps. And the poet says that *Himālaya's* cosmic dimension is natural; by his very essence he stretches in all directions :

> *tiryag ūrdhvam adhastāc ca vyāpako mahimā Hareḥ |*
> *tri-vikramodyatasyāsit sa tu svābhāvikas tava ||*
>
> 6. 71

> The grandeur of Hari spreads sidewise, upwards and downwards, as he took the three steps, but yours spreads by its very nature.

This again shows that he is the essence of this universe, the divinity pervading the cosmic existence. This identification of *Himālaya* with *Hiraṇya-garbha* on the one hand, and *Virāj* on the other, will become more evident if we compare Kālidāsa's description of *Himālaya* with the Ṛgvedic hymn to Prajāpati (X. 121), another name of *Hiraṇya-garbha*. It almost seems, when we read the hymn side by side with the different passages about Himālaya in the poem that Kālidāsa had this hymn in mind while writing; for even the style has one very striking similarity which, in my opinion, is hardly fortuitous. After having introduced the god-souled Himālaya, the poet proceeds to describe him; and this description is grammatically joined to the first verse with a series of subordinate clauses introduced by the relative pronoun *yad* (who) in its various declensional forms like *yaḥ* (nominative), *yam* (accusative), *yasya* (genitive), *yasmin* (locative) or its adverbial form *yatra* (where). In the Vedic hymn too we find the same procedure used. The difference in style between the two is that which exists between Vedic poetry and classical poetry. In the Vedic poem the relative clauses are short and simple, in Kālidāsa's they are more elaborate. One cannot but be struck by this stylistic resemblance.

Nevertheless, only a stylistic similitude cannot be considered sufficient ground for identifying *Himālaya* with *Hiraṇya-garbha*. We have to look deeper into the semantic field. There too we find several clear indications of this symbolism.[16] Let us take a few instances.

The Vedic poem says that *Hiraṇya-garbha* "supported the earth and the sky", *dādhāra pṛthivīm dyām* (X. 121. 1); that "by him was made firm the lofty sky and the earth", *yena dyaur ugrā pṛthivī ca dṛḷhā* (X. 121. 5). And Kālidāsa says that Himālaya's "strength is able to support the earth", *yasya*

sāraṃ dharitrī-dhāraṇa-kṣamam (1. 17), "he bears the burden of the world", *dhuram udvahatā bhuvaḥ* (6. 30) ; he is also said to support the earth from the bottom of the nether world, *ā rasātala-mūlāt tvam avālambisyathā* (6. 68).

Thus the idea of *Himālaya* carrying or supporting the earth is very explicit ; in fact in classical Sanskrit the epithets *bhūdhara*, *bhūbhṛt*, supporter of the earth, had become synonymous to the mountain. But Kālidāsa never uses a word casually ; he gives back to the words all their original vigour and metaphorical value. Thus in the previous example we find that he lays a great deal of emphasis on the idea of the mountain as supporter of the earth. As to the idea of the supporter of the sky or heaven, we have also several allusions. On the one hand Kailāsa, the abode of Śiva, is situated in the Himālayas according to the mythological accounts. The heavenly beings, Apsaras (1. 4), Siddha (1. 5), Vidyādhara (1. 7), Kinnara (1. 8) live on the mountains. On the other hand we find that Kālidāsa has poetically expressed the idea that *Himālaya* supports the sky. The peaks rise high ; the colour of the red minerals of the peaks is reflected on the clouds, *balāhaka-ccheda-vibhakta-rāgām...dhātumattām* (1. 4). The summits rise far above the clouds. This is very beautifully expressed by saying that the Siddha, afraid of the rain, run higher towards the sunny summits : *udvejitā vṛṣṭibhir āśrayante śṛṅgāṇi yasyātapavanti siddāḥ* (1. 5).

Hiraṇya-garbha is called in the ṚV the sole lord of the world, *bhūtasya patir ekaḥ* (X. 121. 1) ; *eka id rājā jagato babhūva* (X. 121. 3) "became the unique king of the moving world" ; this idea is again implied by making *Himālaya* the king of all the mountains, *nagādhirāja* (1. 1) ; he subjugated the earth under his feet which were heavy due to his very substance, *sāra-guru* :

namayan sāra-gurubhiḥ pāda-nyāsair vasundharām |
6. 50

Here we should also notice the double-entendre of *sāra-guru*. Physically he subdues the world under his rocky feet, but *sāra-guru* can also mean, powerful because of his essence, i. e. his all-pervasive divinity. On his material body roam animals, men and heavenly beings ; minerals are found on his body ; all herbs grow there ; he is by his double nature all this world of moving and unmoving things. Again in the *ṚV*, by the might of *Hiraṇya-garbha* exist the mountains, oceans and rivers :

yasyeme himavanto mahitvā yasya samudram rasayā[17] *saha* |
X. 121. 4

The same idea is expressed by Kālidāsa who speaks of the rivers of *Himālaya*, *saritaś ca te* (6. 69), "your rivers" ;[18] *Himālaya* is also the father of many

mountains, such as Maināka, he is called *putravat* (1. 27), "having children". He is the Supreme incarnate in the form of inanimate thing; he is the source, the womb of all things moving and unmoving :

> *sthāne tvāṃ sthāvarātmānaṃ Viṣṇum āhus tathā hi te |*
> *carācarāṇāṃ bhūtānāṃ kukṣir ādhāratāṃ gataḥ ||*
> 6. 67

> You, in your immovable form, are deservedly called Viṣṇu,[19] for your lap has become the support of all things moving and unmoving.

This verse confirms further the identity of the World-Soul and the world with the two aspects of *Himālaya*.

The Vedic poet says, next, that the arms of *Hiraṇya-garbha* extend between the extreme limits of the sky,

> *yasyemaḥ pradiśo yasya bāhū '*
> X. 121. 4

and he measures the space in the atmosphere,

> *yo antarikṣe rajaso vimānaḥ |*
> X. 121. 5

This notion of vast extension and of measure in also clearly expressed by Kālidāsa. Himālaya stands like a measuring rod spanning the earth between the eastern and the western seas.

> *purvāparau toya-nidhi vagāhya sthitaḥ pṛthivyā iva māna-daṇḍaḥ |*
> 1. 1

Pūrva and *apara*, the east and the west, correspond to the *pradiśam* of the Veda, the image of the outstretched arms is also here well suggested, so also the word *māna-daṇḍa* reproduce the word *vimānaḥ*. Elsewhere Kālidāsa says that the limbs of Himālaya stretch to the far limits of space, *vyāpta-dig-antāni...aṅgāni* (6. 59).

This comparison shows quite clearly the closeness between the concept of *Hiraṇya-garbha* and that of *Himālaya*. There are other suggestions too which point to this resemblance and justify the assumption of Himālaya as the symbol of the World-Soul : *Hiraṇya-garbha*, the Golden Seed, it is said, was cast in the waters by Brahman; we may also say that the World-Soul rises from the waters of chaos into creation. This is again suggested by the second line of the verse (1. 1) quoted above. The extreme ends of *Himālaya* are plunged in the oceans; this evokes the image of the mountain rising from

the ocean of infinite waters, like the World-Soul from the undifferentiated primal chaos.

Hiraṇya-garbha is also called Prajāpati, in the Ṛgvedic hymn (X. 121) and elsewhere. Later, in the mythology, we find that Prajāpati is the son of Brahmā, the Creator. The mythological aspect of Prajāpati too is reflected in the conception of *Himālaya*. The poet has made the association between Himālaya and Dakṣa, —one of the former Prajāpatis, —which indicates that *Himālaya*, too, is to be regarded as Prajāpati.

athāvamānena pituḥ prayuktā,
Dakṣasya kanyā Bhava-pūrva-patnī |
satī Satī yoga-visṛṣṭa-dehā,
taṃ janmane śaila-vadhūṃ prapede ||

1. 21

Then the chaste Satī, Dakṣa's daughter, Śiva's wife, driven by her father insulting (her husband) left her body lifeless by the power of yoga and sought the Mountain's consort for re-birth—

or again :

pūrve janane śarīraṃ sā Dakṣa-roṣāt sasarja |

1. 53

in a former life Dakṣa's wrath had caused her to leave her body...

The reincarnation of Satī, as the daughter of Prajāpati Dakṣa is clearly narrated; this suggests by association the reincarnation of Prajāpati as *Himālaya*.

Pārvatī is said to be a descendant of the primordial creator, Brahmā :

kule prasūtiḥ prathamasya vedhasas |

the birth in the race of the first progenitor.

This too indicates that Himālaya, Pārvatī's father, symbolizes Prajāpati. Thus, both by the evocations of the characteristics and aspects of the Vedic *Hiraṇya-garbha*, and by the allusions and associative evocations of Dakṣa Prajāpati, the poet has endeavoured to make of the sentient aspect of *Himālaya* a symbolic representation of the philosophic aspect of the World-Soul.

As we read the poem, God-souled *Himālaya* appears more and more intensely as the soul of the world. But in his static aspect he is also *Virāj*, the world which we perceive as the form of Brahman with our outward

senses, in our waking consciousness. We shall now try to see how Kālidāsa uses the material form of Himālaya as the world, the body of *Hiraṇya-garbha.*

Once we have assumed the aspect of the World-Soul, the aspect of *Virāj* is self-evident ; it is the material, physical aspect of *Himālaya.* Kālidāsa has on several occasions laid stress explicitly on this double aspect. Poetically this aspect has a greater importance. For it is in this world, the body of *Brahman* as *Hiraṇya-garbha* that God, *Īśvara* manifests himself with his *Śakti* : it is here that the divine drama is enacted. This world is the stage, the playground, *lilābhūmi*, of the God of Love, Śiva. *Virāj* is also the visible form of *Brahman* where all the beauty and delight is expressed. And the highest function of poetry, we know, is to reveal to the eye this beauty and delight. Kālidāsa, supremely gifted with the power of poetic seeing, has created this world, *Virāj*, in all its magnificence. *Himālaya* in his physical aspect is the stage of the cosmic play.

Here is life in all its teeming beauty. Beings, divine, semidivine and human, animals and birds move on the mountain-slopes ; here grow all kinds of trees, herbs, reeds ; here rivers flow, cascades fall ; everywhere there is the play of life, love, light ; there is death also, and darkness, but the over-all impression is one of *ānanda*, joy. There is death : the lion kills the elephant, but the mark of blood does not last, the snowy streams wash the blood away, *tuṣāra-sruti-dhauta-raktam.*[20] Kālidāsa has evoked this perceptible form of the world in all its richness and grandeur ; he makes us grasp it with all our senses.

The double aspect, the two-fold form, *dvi-rupa* (6.58) becomes also the source of a number of metaphors where the abstract and the concrete meet. Aṅgiras tells *Himālaya :*

manasaḥ śikharāṇāṃ ca sadṛśi te samunnatiḥ |
6.66

the loftiness of your mind and that of your summits are alike.

We may compare this with a Ṛgvedic line which describes Viśvakarman, the World-maker,

viśvakarmā vimanā ād vihāyā |
X.82.2

Viśvakarman, vast in thought, vast in expanse.

And again, writes Kālidāsa,

punanti lokān puṇyatvāt kīrtayaḥ saritaś ca te |
6.69

your glorious deeds and your rivers purify the worlds by their sanctity—

or :

kāṭhinyaṃ sthāvare kāye bhavatā sarvam arpitam |
idaṃ tu te bhakti-namraṃ satām ārādhanaṃ vapuḥ ||
6.73

you have put all your hardness on your static body. But this (other) form of yours given to the worship of the virtuous is mellow with devotion.

We find thus that the two aspects of the cosmos, soul and body, *Hiraṇya-garbha* and *Virāj* are mixed up in the conception of *Himālaya*. Brahmā symbolizes the transcendental status of the eternal plan, and *Himālaya* the cosmic status in its twofold manifestation, psychic and physical.

Now we will have to consider the individual or the personal status, that of *Īśvara*, Lord of creation.

iii. Īśvara

The Indian religio-philosophical tradition which Kālidāsa inherited and in which he lived and worked, had evolved a mode of global approach to the supreme reality. The idea of the impersonal transcendental *Brahman* was abstract, purely metaphysical, as well as the concept of *Hiraṇya-garbha*. These concepts satisfied the reasoning mind of the intellectual man, but were unable to satisfy the heart's love, *bhakti*, or emotions and feelings and sensations which yearn also to know the Real. Therefore, when man approached *Brahman* as a mystic, as a lover, as a poet, he found *Īśvara*, not an abstract concept, but an individualized Presence. The One, *ekam*, became *īśa*, Lord, *deva*, God. Here philosophy was assimilated to a mystic-poetic vision; the pure concept of *Brahman* merged into the luminous Presence which was called variously Viṣṇu, Śiva, etc.

In the early phase of Indian philosophy and religion the distinction between the impersonal *Brahman* and the personal *Īśvara* was made clear. *Īśvara* was that aspect of *Brahman* which acted in the world in relation to the individual creatures. But this does not mean that He is inferior to the Absolute *Brahman* or the cosmic *Hiraṇya-garbha*. For the *bhakta*, lover, for the mystic and the poet, it is this aspect which predominates. We have thus a twofold relation: *Brahman-Īśvara* and *Īśvara-Hiraṇya-garbha*. In the former relation, says Radhakrishnan, "the first term indicates infinite being and possibility, and the second suggests creative freedom."[21] But they are

essentially the same. Both aspects are above the world. When we consider the relation *Īśvara-Hiraṇya-garbha,* we find that *Hiraṇy-garbh* is relate l to the world. He is therefore in a sense the cosmic being created by *Īśvara* pervading the universe. "Hiraṇya-garbha", says Radhakrishnan, "is organically bound up with the world. Himself a creature, the first born of creation, he shares the fate of all creation in the end. But *Īśvara* is prior to the World-Soul. The principle of process applies to God. While he is the expression of the non-temporal he is also the temporal, *Īśvara,* the eternal Being functions in the temporal *Hiraṇya-garbha.*"[22]

In Kālidāsa the idea of *Īśvara,* represented by Śiva, is far more advanced than that which we find in the Upaniṣad. It is the idea as developed later in the great Purāṇic literature. Kālidāsa's Śiva has much in common with the Blessed Lord, *bhagavat,* of the *Gitā.* Indeed we see that Śiva is more than *Īśvara* of this triple division *Brahman-Īśvara-Hiraṇya-garbha;* he is the *Puruṣottama* of the *Gitā.* Brahmā, in KS, says that neither he nor Viṣṇu can measure the extent of his might (2.58).

With the introduction of Śiva the fourfold philosophic substratum is complete. Śiva as *Īsvara* is a notion which had already a deep root in the Indian tradition. Even if we overlook the indications about the pre-Aryan Śiva we have sufficient ground to believe that he had already merged with the Vedic Rudra and gradually attained the status of the Supreme Person in the eatly Purāṇa.

We need not here enter into the history of the evolution of Śiva as the Supreme Deity.[23] By the time of Kālidāsa Rudra was certainly superceded by Śiva who had assimilated the attributes of Rudra. Of this process perhaps the most important document is the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* where Rudra becomes for the first time a personal God of love. In the same text Rudra is also called on several occasions by the name Śiva. In Kālidāsa's conception we find that the double aspect of Rudra-Śiva is present. In *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* the primary aspect is that of the Vedic Rudra, the Terrible, but gradually he merges into the benign aspect of Śiva, *ya te Rudra śiva tanur* (3.5), "O Rudra, that aspect of yours which is benign...", *dakṣinam mukham* (4.21), "gracious face". But there is a change in Kālidāsa, the aspect of Śiva is primary, that of Rudra secondary. And rhe aspect of Rudra manifests itself only to destroy *Kāma,* desire, which is an obstacle to the path of pure love and knowledge.

In Kālidāsa Śiva is the Supreme Reality, Supreme Person, protector of the world, *jagatoc-charaṇya* (5.76), origin of all prosperity, *prabhavaḥ sa*

saṃpadām (5.77), master of the three worlds, *tri-loka-nātha* (5.77). He is also the Unknowable, for there is none who can know his real essence, *na santi yāthārthya-vidaḥ Pinākinaḥ* (5.77). Śiva is also described as the One, *eka*, the origin even of *Brahmā*, *atma-bhuvo 'pi kāraṇam* (5.81). The world is his form, he is *viśva-mūrti* (5.78), and he is also the self of the universe, *viśvātman* (6.1). All these point out that like Rudra of *Śvetāśvtara Upaniṣad* and *Puruṣottama* of the *Gitā*, Śiva is above *Akṣara Brahman*, *Hiraṇya-garbha* and *Virāj*. We may here compare Kālidāsa's expression already quoted :

sa hi devaḥ paraṃ jyotis tamaḥ-pāre vyavasthitam |
2.58

with what the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* says :

vedāham etaṃ puruṣaṃ mahāntam āditya-varṇaṃ tamasaḥ parastāt |
3.8

I know this Supreme Person who has the radiance of the sun, who is beyond darkness...

Such is the aspect of *Īśvara*. In the *Gitā*, too the aspect of the Lord, *bhagavat*, as the Supreme Puruṣa predominates. Arjuna says :

tvam akṣaraṃ paramaṃ veditavyam
tvam asya viśvasya paraṃ nidhānam |
tvam avyayaḥ śāśvata-dharma-goptā
sanātanas tvaṃ puruṣo mato me ||
11.18

You are the Supreme Immutable who is to be know,
you are the great foundation of this universe,
you are the imperishable guardian of the eternal Law,
you are, I believe, the Sempiternal Person.

The first three aspects, as we see, represent *Brahman*, *Hiraṇya-garbha* and *Īśvara*. And the fourth which is beyond these three is the *Puruṣottama*.

There are many passages where Śiva is shown as the Supreme Lord, the highest Personal God of the theists. He is invoked by the Seven Sages as the indwelling Soul, *antar-ātmāsi dehinām* (6.21). The sages say also, through a rhetorical question, that Śiva is the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer of the world :

kim yena sṛjasi vyaktam uta yena bibharṣi tat |
atha viśvasya samhartā bhājaḥ katama eṣa te ||
6. 23

Is this the form you take when you create the visible world, or that when you support it, or the form which is the destroyer of the world ?

And again we have a clear indication of Śiva being represented as the *Iśvara* of the Sāṃkhya-Yoga, who is the Supreme *Puruṣa* beyond all other *Puruṣa.*

aṇimādi-guṇopetam aspṛṣṭa-puruṣāntaram |
śabdam iśvara ity uccaiḥ...bibharti yaḥ ||
6. 75

He who bears the sublime name "*Iśvara*" (Lord), invested with qualities such as *aṇiman* (the power to become as small as an atom), a title which lies beyond the reach of any other *puruṣa*...

The words *puruṣa* and *iśvara* have a clear connotation of the Sāṃkhya-Yoga philosophy ; and Śiva is thus identified with *Iśvara,* above the multiplicity of *Puruṣa.*

We shall see how Kālidāsa works out this aspect and what the relation is between God and the World, between *Puruṣa,* Soul of Nature, and *Prakṛti,* Nature. "In *Iśvara*" writes Radhakrishnan, "we have the two elements of wisdom and power, *Śiva* and *Śakti.* By the latter the Supreme who is unmeasured and immeasurable becomes measured and defined. Immutable being becomes infinite fecundity."[24]

It is this division which stands at the head of creation ; it is the origin of the world-play, the foundation of the cosmic drama to which Kālidāsa has given expression. Once we have established the Reality of *Brahman* (personified as Brahmā), we have no need of It in the poetic unfolding of the cosmic poem. We have now to consider how *Iśvara,* personified B*rahman,* acts on the world-stage, what his relations are with the World-Soul and the world. In this manifestation the aspect of *Śakti* or *Prakṛti* is of the utmost importance. Without her He remains unmanifest.

In a later chapter we shall see how Kālidāsa has poeticized the philosophic concept of *Iśvara-Śakti, Puruṣa-Prakṛti.* We hope to find there a poetic transmutation of some leading ideas of the *Gitā,* and of the Sāṃkhya and the Yoga as represented by the *Gitā.* Suffice it to note here that Śiva in *KS* is the Supreme God sung by *Śvetāśvatara* :

tam īśvarāṇām paramaṃ maheśvaram
tam devatānām paramaṃ ca daivatam |
patiṃ patīnāṃ paramaṃ parastāt
vidāma devaṃ bhuvaneśam iḍyam ||

VI. 7

May we know Him, the adorable God, the ruler of the world, the transcendent, the supreme Lord of lords, who is, among the gods the highest God, among the masters the highest Master.

REFERENCES

1. *Kumārasaṃbhava,* "The Birth of Kumāra".
2. Sri Aurobindo, *Kālidāsa,* pp. 226-7.
3. Giuseppe Tucci, "*Note sulle fonti di Kālidāsa*", pp. 1-26.
4. *ChU.,* III.14.1.
5. *BĀU.,* I.4.1.

3a. *Jaiminiyopanisad-brāhmana* (I.33.1) lists the four statuses thus : *tri-vṛt sama catus-pat. Brahma tṛtīyam Indras tṛtīyam Prajāpatis tṛtīyam annam eva caturthaḥ padaḥ.* This is a very clea. enunciation of the fourfold classification we have adopted with a different nomenclature.

6. lit. that which has food, that which has no food, i.e. that which eats, that which does not eat.
7. nom. sing. of *virāj.*
8. S. Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upaniṣads,* p. 698; A more detailed discussion in the same author's, *Indian Philosophy,* Vol. I, pp. 170-3. For the evolution and analysis of the fourfold manifestation of the *brahman,* see, Dipak Bhattacharya, "The Doctrine of the Four in the Upaniṣads", in : *Journal of Indian Philosophy,* Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 1-34. One of the lesser Upaniṣads, the Paiṅgala (I. 1-6) gives a clear classification in Vedānta-Sāṃkhya terminology. The devision is apparently fivefold, but the second and the third terms are but variations of the same : (1) *brahman,* (2) *mūla-prakṛti/ śākṣi-caitanya,* (3) *avyakta/ īśvara-caitanya,* (4) *maha/ hiraṇyagarbha-caitanya,* (5) *ahaṁkāra/ virāṭ-caitanya.*
8. "The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (. . . .) stands at the door of the Bhakti school and pours its loving adoration on Rudra-Śiva instead of on Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa as the *Bhg.* did in later times when the Bhakti doctrine was in full swing". R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣnavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems,* Strasburg 1913, p. 110.
9. *BĀU.,* III.8.8.
10. This aspect of *brahman* is also called *para-brahman,* the Supreme Brahman, in order to distinguish between this absolute *brahman* and the all-pervading *brahman,* for *iśvara, hiraṇya-garbha* and *virāj* are also *brahwan.* Nothing that exists is other than *brahman.*

In relation to this highest (fourth) status we may here quote what Sri Aurobindo says, "The Absolute Parabrahman is unknowable to us, not because It is the nothingness of all that we are, for rather whatever we are in truth or in seeing is nothing but Parabrahman, but because It is pre-existent and supra-existent to even the highest and purest methods and the most potent and illimitable instruments of which soul in the body is capable.

"In Parabrahman knowledge ceases to be knowledge and becomes an inexpressible identity". "*The Web of Yoga*", p. 44. See also the comments of Radhakrishnan on *Mā. Up.* *The Principal Upaniṣads*, pp. 695ff.

11. cp. *sa imam evātmānaṃ dvedhāpātayat, tataḥ patiś ca patnī cābhavatām.* *BĀU*. 1.4.3.

12. *KS*. 2.4. See also the verses 9 and 10 of the same book quoted in the previous chapter.

13. Kālidāsa devotes several verses (2.4-15) to the praise of Brahmā. These have very little poetic value and would have no raison d'ètre except for the perfection of the cosmologic scheme. From the mythological and hymnological point of view they have no doubt some value. But Kālidāsa was too great and too conscious an artist to let these verses appear if he did not have this philosophical significance in mind.

14. There is another mention of "*brahman*" (6.16) where the sense is 'Veda' as the commentator Mallinātha has noted : *yad brahma samyag āmnātaṃ*", "as the Veda is thoroughly studied".

15. See note 8.

16. In the verse 4 of the Vedic hymn there is explicit mention of the mountains which exist by the might of *hiraṇya-garbha: yasyeme himavanto mahitvā*, "he by whose might all these snowy mountains exist". However here there is no personification of the mountains, or their identification with the World-Soul. The word is in the plural and points evidently to the created world-aspects of *virāj*.

17. Here I am inclined to take the meaning of *rasā* as 'river' in general, as suggested by Sāyana. "*. . . raso jalam*", he writes, "*tad-vato rasā nadī*". From the structural point of view too it seems that the poet of the hymn does not mean a particular river Rasā of the nether worlds; here *samudra*, ocean, is a generic term, and [also *himvat*, mountain. It is therefore natural that the poet should speak not of a particular river but of rivers in general. *Rasā* is to be taken as a generic term, *jātav eka-vacanam*. Also the general purport suggests this interpretation: not only the river Rasā exists by the might of *hiraṇya-garbha*, but all the rivers of the world.

18. Kālidāsa writes, "*acchinnāmala-santānāḥ . . . saritaś ca te*". The first compound is generally translated as "having an unbroken and clear flow". Thus the words mean, ". . . and your rivers which flow clear and uniterrupted". But I find here a double entendre : *santāna* can also mean "off-spring", "progeny". Kālidāsa himself uses the word in this sense, *santānārthāya vidhaye* (*Raghu*. 1.34), *santāna-kāmāya* (*ibid*. 2.65), *śuddha-santāna-kāmaiḥ* (*ibid*. 18.53). In the present instance *archinnāmala-santānāḥ* would suggest that the rivers are born out of the mountain, are, so to say, its off-springs. This would be in accordance with the idea of the World-Soul. I, therefore, think that we should not overlook this *śleṣa* which might have been intended by the poet himself.

19. Mallinātha points out the reference to the *Gītā* (X 25) where the Lord says, "I am Himālaya among unmoving things" *sthāvarāṇāṃ Himālayaḥ*.
20. See also the verses 1.3-16.
21. Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upaniṣads*, p. 63.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
23. For a brief survey of the evolution of Rudra-Śiva, see Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, I. pp. 84ff and 254ff.
24. Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upaniṣads*, p. 64.

CHAPTER III

THE POETIC RECONCILIATION : RUDRA-ŚIVA

In the previous chapter we have tried to outline the nature of the fourfold substratum of the world-play which lies as the foundation of Kālidāsa's poem. On that foundation evolve other more important ideas, especially the idea of *Iśvara*, the Supreme Deity, the Lord of the universe, and the idea of *Śakti*, *Iśvarā's* creative energy. In *KS* these two notions are personified as Śiva and Pārvatī who are the principal characters of the poem.[1]

Kālidāsa did not have to make this personification himself, it was already there full-fledged in the Purāṇic mythology. What Kālidāsa did, was to take up that mythology as well as the philosophical ideas that were growing out of it,—or those which the cult of Śiva were gradually assimilating,—and fashion a poem of exquisite beauty. There is a very close relation between mythology, philosophy and poetry. Mythology is the attempt of the pre-rational or suprarationel mystical mind to understand and explain the immense religious, psychological, social and physical universe which it encounters.[2] The ultimate end of myth, says Susanne K. Langer, is "serious envisagement of its (the world's) fundamental truths; moral orientation, not escape. (....) it presents however metaphorically, a world-picture, an insight into life generally .... "[3] But in this apprehension or envisagement there is no worry about logicality; contradictory notions may stand side by side without shocking anybody. For the mythopoeic mind is realistic and accepts the contradictions which are elements inherent in the phenomenal reality. But the rational mind cannot bear to leave contradictions unreconciled ; therefore when it evolves a system, it tries to appear logical and consistent by taking a certain position, a certain point of view. The Sanskrit word *darśana*, which is generally translated by 'philosophy' is really a philosophical point of view. This point of veiw is chosen in such a way as to eliminate the contradictions that exist in the phenomenal world. All philosophical systems which

have tried to explain Existence are either some sort of Monism or else some sort of Dualism.[4] Monistic thought either posits one eternal and absolute principle, *Brahman*, God, from which originate the contradictions which are seen not as contradictions but as different aspects of the One Absolute, or, like the illusionistic monism of the Vedānta, posits the One Absolute as the only Real and all else as a great illusion. In both cases, though for the ordinary mind the contradictions remain, the philosophical mind is set at rest, for it has taken a certain position. The dualistic systems do not try to resolve the contradictions at all, on the contrary they perpetuate and lay emphasis on them. From their point of veiw the opposites are co-eternal.

We have here spoken about philosophy as *darśana*, but Sanskrit has another notion of philosophy too which is termed *brahma-vidyā*, the knowledge of the Absolute. This is not a rational knowledge but a knowledge to which one attains by an intuitive and mystical identity with the Absolute. In this case here is no longer any question of contradiction.

Poetry too is a path to knowledge. It incorporates both philosophy and mythology but surpasses both as *brahma-vidyā* does. But whereas reconciliation of *brahma-vidyā* is arrived at through a knowing higher than the mental knowing, the reconciliation of poetry is arrived at through a higher feeling. The similarity of the two was already noted by the Sanskrit rhetoricians when they compared the enjoyment of *kāvya* with the enjoyment of *Brahman*,*kāvya-rasa* with *brahmāsvādana*.[5]

The poet uses the intuitive collective knowledge of the myth creatively and symbolically so as to give a concrete representation of the truth. The mythic symbol becomes, so to say, the body of the meaning that the poet wants to convey. "When they are most complete, myths define the relationship of man to himself and to God in such a way that there is no distinction between symbol and meaning. A poet may then use the mythology of his age to present, in concrete symbols embodying a metaphysic, the most complete expression of his time. As a civilization declines, the chasm between symbols and thier meaning widens until symbols become decorative form and their meaning becomes abstracted into philosophy."[6] At the time of Kālidāsa the Indian mind did not divorce mythic symbolism from metaphysics. In fact India has never made a thorough clear-cut distinction between these two modes of knowwledge. There is much truth in G. A. Feuerstein's contention that the Eastern mentality belongs pre-eminetly to the mythic structure;

but he hastens to add that the mental component is certainly not lacking and that great philosophies "form an intrinsic part of the Eastern heritage, particularly that of India, which are in no way inferior to those that have emerged on the Greek peninsula. At the same time, however, it is clear", he says further, "that in the East the mental-rational component has at no time become so completely, and fatally, divorced from its mythic substratum as has been the case in the West."[7] Indian poets have used consciously the symbolism inherent in the myths to give a concrete imaged representation of the world-view that was the common heritage of their people in the time. Poets are, particularly in ancient India, the living links between the mythical and the metaphysical worlds. Referring to this fact Gonda remarks: "Dieses von hervorragenden gelehrten Dichtern jahrhunderteleng den "mythologischen" Themen gegenüber bekundete Interesse beweist, dass die volkstümlich-anschauliche Darstellung der in diesem Stoff liegenden überzeitlichen Wahrheiten und die intellektuell-philosophische Ergrüdung derselben Hand in Hand gingen."[8]

Kālidāsa is perhaps the greatest of those who have used the mythic symbols to express high metaphysical abstractions and truths which belong to the transcendental order of being.

The mythical figures of Śiva and Pārvatī are the characters of Kālidāsa. Śiva-myths are extremely complex and abound in contradictions.[9] At the time of Kālidāsa, though the proliferation of the myths had not reached its later extension, yet the main contradictions were already there. In fact the proliferation of the myths was perhaps due to an effort of the mythopoeic mind to resolve the contradictions. O'Flaherty after quoting in this connection Emil Durkheim who has spoken of myths which 'no doubt explain nothing and merely shift the difficulty elsewhere, but at least in so doing appear to attenuate its crying illogicality, continues that 'the particular characteristic of mythology which carries out this masquerade' is the 'element of repetition' (....) many versions are necessary because no one version is willing to state, the full paradox."[10]

Such is not the way of a thinker and of a poet. Side by side with the Purānic development of Śiva-myths there were philosophical efforts at reconciling some of the contradictions. Kālidāsa's is a poetic solution which assimilates philosophical solutions. We shall try and see here how some of the philorophical ideas concerning these contradictions have been transmuted into poetic thoughts. Speaking of poetic thoughts

Coombes writes: "Poetic thought occurs when the idea is felt, not merely utilized, by the poet, who makes his words unfold the thought as it develops, usually, *the thought is felt through concrete words and images*, the abstract being too vague and general."[11]

In this chapter and the following we shall study some of the ideas involved in these contradictions as well as their poetic resolution under the following headings: *Rudra-Śiva* and *Asceticism-Eroticism*.

These paradoxes lie in the character of Śiva himself. From the early days of the evolution of Śiva we have them. We need not here enter into the discussion of all the different elements which have contributed to the growth of the Śiva-concept; we will however very briefly study the ambivalent character which is an inherent part of the Śiva-mythology.

Already in the Ṛgveda the double aspect of Rudra is evident. He is a terrible god, destructive, *kṣayat-vira* (ṚV. I. 114. 1), but at the same time it is he who can save man from destruction. Therefore the prayer goes up to Rudra,

> *mā nas toke tanaye mā na āyau mā no goṣu mā no aśveṣu rīriṣaḥ*
> *vīrān mā no Rudra bhāmito vadhīr*
> (*ṚV. I. 114. 8*)
>
> O Rudra, do not injure our children, our progeny, our cattle, our horses; out of anger do not kill our heroic men.

The vedic seer tries to discover behind his apparent frightfulness his auspicious form:

> *kva sya te Rudra mṛḷayākur hasto yo asti bheṣajo jalāṣaḥ* (*ṚV. II. 33. 7*)

Where, O Rudra, is your compassionate hand which is a soothing remedy ?

This *mṛḷayākur hastaḥ*, 'compassionate hand', may be compared to the *dakṣinaṃ mukhaṃ*, 'gracious face' (*Śv.* U. IV. 21) and *śivā-tanūr*, 'auspicious body' (V.S. XVI. 2; Śv. U. III. 5)

From the very beginning, though his aspect of might was emphasized, yet he was not demoniac. It was not just an euphemism which made the *ṛṣi* say:

> *īśānād asya bhuvanasya bhūrer na vā u yoṣad Rudrād asuryam* (*ṚV. II. 33. 9*)

Let not the life-dynamism depart from Rudra, ruler of this vast world.[12]

In the *Śatarudrīya* hymn of the *Yajur Veda* the poet-seer, after having invoked Rudra's wrath, his bow and arrow, his mightly arms, says :[13]

yā te Rudra śivā tanūr aghorāpāpa-kāśinī
tayā nas tanvā śantamayā giri-śantābhicākaśīhi
yām iṣuṃ giri-śanta haste bibharṣy astave
śivāṃ giritra tāṃ kuru mā hiṃsīḥ puruṣaṃ jagat
(*VS. XVI.* 2-3)

With that body of yours which is not frightful, which shows no evil, O Rudra, with that most kindly body, O haunter of the mountains, look on us.

The arrow which, O haunter of the mountains, you hold in your hand to shoot, make that harmless, O guardian of the mountains, do not hurt our men, nor any living things.

The early seers were aware of the ambivalent character of Rudra, in *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, out of the eight names of Rudra four refer to his terrific form : Rudra, Śarva (or Sarva), Ugra, Aśani; and four to his benign, pacific form: Bhava, Paśupati, Mahādeva, Īśāna. The name Śiva does not appear in those texts as a proper name.[14] The *Atharva Veda* too, which must have played an important part in the dovelopment of the Śiva-cult, makes clearly the distinction between *Bhava*, 'Existant' *Śarva*, 'Archer', 'Injurer'. We should here notice also that as Śarva, the Injurer, Rudra's weapons are the bow and the arrow :

arhan bibharṣi sāyakāni dhanva
(*ṚV.*, II.33.10)

By right you carry bow and arrows.

In the same hymn *heti*, 'dart', 'javelin' is used ; it seems that *śūla*, 'trident' was unknown as an attribute of Rudra. Kālidāsa too, we shall see later, does not associate *śūlin*, bearer of *śūla*, an epithet of Śiva, to represent his destructive aspect. But the archer, *pināka-pāṇi*, or *pinākin*, is associated in Kālidāsa's poem with Rudra.

When we come to the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* we find that the auspicious face of Rudra has ousted, though not completely, his terrible face[15]. This Upaniṣad, as we have noted earlier, is of great importance to our study of the fundamental philosophieal ideas of Kālidāsa. In this Upaniṣad too Rudra-Śiva assumes the highest status of *Iśvara*, the personal God. Although, repeating the *Vājasaneyī Saṃhitā* the *ṛṣi* prays to Rudra, *mā hiṃsīḥ puruṣaṃ jagat* (*ŚvU.*III.6) 'do not hurt our men nor any living things', yet the negative aspect is over-looked.

The whole emphasis falls on the *śivā tanūr*, 'kindly body'. The *Mahābhārata* also says :

> *dve tanū tasya devasy brāhmaṇāḥ vedajñā viduḥ |*
> *ghorām anyāṃ śivām anyām ...||*[16]
>
> The knowers of the *Brahman*, the knowers of the Veda, know two bodies of him, one which is terrible, the other kindly...

The same idea is expressed by Kālidāsa :

> *sa bhīma-rūpaḥ śiva ity udīryate |*
> (5.77)
>
> he whose form is terrrible is called Śiva, the kindly.

But Kālidāsa did not overlook the dark visage. He has given a new dimension to the destructive power of Rudra. This aspect is associated with the destruction of *Kāma*. There is also another negative aspect associated with the ordeal of Pārvatī, in which Śiva tests the purity and strength of her aspiration and love. In both the cases the terrible and frightful aspect is brought forward in relation to a change of the lower status of consciousness and life into a higher status.

The word Rudra which in the Purāṇa has become a common synonym of Śiva, is used by Kālidāsa only once in this poem. In the closing verse of the third *sarga* (Canto) of which the title is *Madana-dahana*, 'the Burning of Madana', the name Rudra appears. And in one single compound Kālidāsa reveals the terror of this form in which man sees the terrible anger of God and trembles in fear. Pārvatī has been a witness to Kāma's destruction; she could not bear the terrible sight, she closed her eyes 'in fear of Rudra's anger', *Rndra-saṃrambha-bhityā* (3.76). There are other names and epithets of Śiva which denote his destructive aspect[17]. Of these we may note *pināka-pāṇi*, 'having the bow pināka in his hand', or *pinākin*, 'having the pināka'; *śūlin*, 'having the trident'; *smara-śāsana*, 'chastizer of Kāma', and *purāri* or *pura-śāsana*, 'foe or chastizer of the city' and *śarva*, 'injurer'. Of these epithets *śūlin* does not seem to evoke for Kālidāsa the destructive aspect. Out of the five times he employs the word, only once[18] can it be said to have any suggestion of terror. The other usages are associated with his auspicious form : as master of the seven sages sent by Śiva to ask *Himālaya* his daughter Pārvatī in marriage (6.94); three times more *śūlin* appears as a lover in the love-play with his newly wedded bride Pārvatī (8.7,18,79.).

It is also possible that in Book 8, where Kālidāsa describes the love and union of the divine couple he does not maintain the distinction between the

two forms. For they are indeed reconciled, Rudra has done his work of destruction and Kāma has revived from the ashes. Here Śiva is above the dichotomy. We find also that the epithets *pinākin* (8.2) and *anaṅga-śāsana*, 'chastizer of Kāma' (8.6) are used without any reference to the terror or destruction. But in the previous books the two aspects are quite distinctly emphasized.

In Book 3 we see Indra with Kāma. Indra and the other gods have been driven away by the demon Tāraka from their high heaven. Brahmā has revealed to them that only a son of Śiva can vanquish the hostile powers and restore the gods' former status. It was also told that Pārvatī, the daughter of Himālaya, would be the only suitable bride for Śiva. But Śiva was in deep meditation, unapproachable, unperturbable. Indra then thought of Kāma, Desire Incarnate, who could perhaps help the gods in their dire predicaments by rousing Śiva to love. Kāma has often served loyally the king of the gods in various ways; he has never failed in his mission, for he knows that none can resist his power; even great ascetics have fallen victim to his flower-arrows. Recounting his past exploits, Kāma says in his proud temerity:

tava prasādāt kusumāyudho 'pi
sahāyam ekaṃ Madhum eva labdhvā/
kuryām Harasyāpi pināka-pāṇer
dhairya-cytiṃ ke mama dhanvino 'nye //
(3.10)

By your grace, with *Madhu* (Spring) as my only companion, I whose missiles are but flowers, would break the concentration even of Hara (Śiva), the wielder of the *pināka*–bow: what are other archers beside me !

This is the first place where the Rudra-aspect is alluded to. And this verse is remarkable by its double dramatic irony: in the first place Kāma was as yet unaware that he was indeed to measure his strength with Śiva, and secondly Śiva's anger, as we see later, reduced him and his pride to a handful of ashes.

We find again the use of *pinākin* and *pināka-pāṇi* in relation to the destruction of Kāma :

dahatā mano-bhavaṃ pinākinā/
(5.1)

...by the wielder of the pināka–bow burning (Kāma), the mind-born.

a-rūpa-hāryaṃ Madanasya nigrahāt pināka-pāṇim/
(5.53)

(Śiva) the bearer of pināka is not to be got through (physical) beauty as is shown by his destruction of Kāma.

In both these[19], the destructiveness is directed towards Kāma. The next verse uses the word *purāri*, 'foe of the city', and the Rudra-aspect is brought into prominence. Speaking of Kāma's arrow which was unable to touch Śiva it is said :

asahya-humkāra-nivartitaḥ purā purārim aprāpta-mukhaḥ/
śilī-mukhaḥ (...) *puṣpa-dhanvanaḥ/*
(5.54)

previously the arrow of (Kāma,) archer with a bow of flowers, of which the point could not reach (Śiva), the foe of cities, (was) hurled back by his unbearable roar...

Purāri or *tripurāri* is an epithet of Śiva as the destructor of three demon-cities. This denotes again terror and fearfulness. And with this, we notice, is associated another aspect of Rudra, *humkāra*, roar. Even in the Vedic literature we find some association of Rudra with the roaring; he is the father of the *Marut*, the windgods, "the noise made by them, and often mentioned, is thunder and the roaring of the winds"[20]; he has also his yellers and his uproarous armies (*AV*. XI.2).

This association of *humkāra*, considered in the Purāṇa as Rudra's weapon, might have also its origin in the etymology of the name itself. *Taittiriya Samhitā* derives it from *rud-*, 'to yell, to roar', and this etymology, even if it is false[21], has certainly made *humkāra* an inseparable part of the Rudra-concept.

Kālidāsa has once again used *pura-śāsana*, 'destroyer of cities' (7.30); the use in this place has no special significance. Śiva is preparing himself for the wedding, and the *mātṛkā*, the divine mothers, put before him, the *pura-śāsana*, various ornaments. But both in this verse and in the verse 5.54, there is a variant reading; *smara-śāsana* and *smarāri* respectively. In both cases *purāri* and *pura-śāsana* have lesser suggestiveness. They seem to have been attracted by alliterative considerations alone: in 5.54 the word *pura*, and in 7.30 *purastāt* have no doubt influenced the use. In both instances, however, the use of *smarāri*, 'foe of desire' and *smara-śāsana*, 'chastizer of desire' gives not only a better meaning but even the alliterative scheme becomes subtler and more complex by breaking the monotony of a mechanical repetition.

Smara-śāsana is also used in 6.3. The use here as well as in 7.30 (variant of *pura-śāsana*) is very significant. Here we find that Śiva is in love with

Pārvatī and wants to marry her. Earlier in his anger he has reduced Kāma to ashes. Is Śiva now a victim of that same Kāma ? If it were so, the epithet *smara-śāsana* would be a bitter irony, which would be doing violence to the religious feelings of the readers, by making the great god a miserable figure of ridicule. Kālidāsa would not commit such an error of taste—the sublime grandeur in which the character of Śiva is depicted stands in glaring contradiction to this low irony. This can only mean that Śiva is indeed the chastizer of Passion in its lower form. The destruction of Passion does not mean the destruction of Love—there is a purification, a transmutation. On the one hand Śiva, by destroying Kāma, shows that he is master of passion, on the other hand Pārvatī also achieves the highest love through *tapas*; only after this their union becomes possible. We shall come back to this important ambivalence of Kāma.

The only mention of *Śarva*, which is a specific Rudra-aspect known of old is also mentioned in relation to Kāma :

dhrmeṇāpi padaṃ Śarva kārite Pārvatiṃ prati|
purvāparādha-bhītasya Kāmasyoccohvasitaṃ manaḥ||
(6.14)

And when (considerations of) dharma induced Śarva to take the (first) step towards (his marriage with) Pārvatī, the spirit of Kāma, full of fear at his former offence, took courage (again).

This verse stresses the aspect of terror : Rudra is terrible for Kāma; but we find already an indication of a higher status of Kāma, where Kāma is transformed by *dharma*. As it has been said in the previous verse :

kṛiyāṇāṃ khalu dharmyāṇāṃ sat-patnyo mūla-kāraṇam|
(6.13)

indeed are good wives the first cause of *dharma*.

Of the three great objects of the householder's life, *kāma*, *artha*, *dharma*, the third was his duty towards God, the forefathers and towards religion in its various manifestations. This gave a greater meaning to *kāma*, enjoyment of desires, from which sexual desire was not excluded. When *kāma* was thus made subservient to *dharma* it was not practised for one's own selfish satisfaction of animal passions, but was lifted to a wider and a higher context of the continuity of religion and religious duties in society.

Thus Kālidāsa hints at a higher status of *kāma*, at his regeneration. But this is not the highest state. And therefore Kāma has to wait and his promised resuscitation will only come when Śiva and Pārvatī are united.

After that union, as we see in Book 8, their love is not that of a couple performing the householder's *dharma*, but is apparently presided over by the same erotic *kāma* with all its passion. But this is only the surface. There is a greater symbolism, which we shall later try to reveal, which shows that this union expressed through images of erotic love has a deeper spiritual implication.

From the above considerations we ascertain that the Rudra-aspect is one that is closely linked with Kāma. Rudra is the wrath of God that burns down all obstacles to perfect love, to the union of Śiva and Śakti. We shall see that this divine marriage is not just a mythological fact but has vast philosophical consequences. Kāma as unregenerate desire is destroyed so that a purer love may manifest itself. In the very beginning Kāma has been shown as defying Śiva but once he stands looking at him who sat in deep meditation, he is crippled with fear :

> *nālakṣayat sādhvasa-sanna-hastaḥ*
> *srastaṃ śaraṃ cāpam api svahastāt |*
> (3.51)
>
> he whose hands were paralysed with fear did not even notice that the bow and arrow had slipped from his hand.

The description of Śiva in meditation is also significant, for it shows that the Rudra-aspect is inseparable from the Śiva-aspect but the former has been subdued :

> *a-vṛṣṭi-saṃrambham ivāmbu-vāham*
> *apām ivādhāram anuttaraṅgam|*
> *antaś-carāṇāṃ Marutām nirodhān,*
> *nivāta-niṣkampam iva pradīpam||*
> (3.48)
>
> Like a cloud without the menace of rain, like an ocean without surging waves, subduing the Marut who roam within (Śiva sat), an unflickering flame in a windless place.

The whole description is that of a tremendous power held under control, a power that can burst forth at any moment and destroy the whole world, a power like that of the monsoon rains devastating crops, drowning men and cattle. This is indeed Rudra, the terrible. But these cosmic destructive forces are subdued, and what we have is the image of the peaceful God, *śānta*, benign God, Śiva. We should also notice the expression *antaś-carāṇāṃ Marutām*, 'the *Marut* who roam within'[4]. This expression is mostly translated as the vital airs, *prāṇādi*[22]. The expression no doubt has this meaning of the

prāṇa, the vital breath, which is the foundation of yoga-practices of *prāṇāyāma*, and which the yogin has to subdue and canalize. But it seems to me that there is much more than only that. Śiva is here not only a yogin but the Supreme God who contains within himself the universe. Therefore, these *Marut* are not just *prāṇa-vāyu* but also the winds in nature, in their destructive form, as storm-gods. This again takes us back to the Vedic Rudra who was the father of the *Marut*. Thus Kālidāsa reveals to us, with the help of a suggestive complex of polyvalent images the Rudra-aspect inherent in Śiva.

This force finally rushed forth to destroy Kāma who stood there in front of Śiva in order to break the barrage of Śiva's self-restraint. In a way Kāma succeeded, but the outcome was unpredicted. The mere presence of Kāma partly disturbed the calm of Śiva's mind, the ocean which was without waves was troubled :

kiṃcit parilupta-dhairyaś
candrodayārmbha ivāmbu-rāśiḥ/
(3.67)

his calm restraint somewhat shaken like the ocean's when the moon rises[23].

But there is an immense difference between human ascetics who mortify their flesh in order to overcome desire but fall easy victims to the *apsaras*, and this divine ascetic who ever remains the master of desire. The outrage done to his ascetic calm evokes only his terrible wrath, *manyu*, and fire shoots forth from his third eye reducing Kāma to ashes :

tapaḥ-parāmarśa-vivṛddha-manyor
bhrū-bhaṅga-duṣprekṣa-mukhasya tasya/
sphurann udarciḥ sahasā tṛtīyād
akṣṇaḥ kṛśānuḥ kila niṣpapāta//
krodhaṃ prabho saṃhara saṃhareti
yāvad giraḥ khe Marutāṃ caranti/
tāvat sa vahnir Bhava-netra-janmā
bhasmāvaśeṣaṃ Madanam cakāra//
(3.71.72)

His (Śiva's) wrath increased at the offence commited against his asceticism, his face with knitted brows became terrible to look at, and all at once,it is said, a high-blazing fire shot forth from his third eye.

As the cries of the gods[24] rose in the sky, "Curb, O Lord, curb your anger !", the fire born of Śiva's eye reduced Kāma to ashes.

We see, therefore, that the Rudra-aspect here is very different from that which was manifest in the Vedic literature in which men cry out to him not to kill their parents and children, their cattle and horses. In Kālidāsa's conception Rudra is that force of Śiva which destroys all obstacles in the path of *tapas*, in this case the obstacle is *kāma*, sexual desire.

tam āśu vighnaṃ tapasas tapasvī
vanaspatiṃ vajra ivāvabhajya/
strī-saṃnikarṣaṃ parihartum icchann,
antar-dadhe Bhūta-patiḥ sa-bhūtaḥ//
(3.74)

Having destroyed in a moment that obstacle to his tapas, like a thunderbolt that blasts a tree, Śiva, the ascetic, wanting to avoid the proximity of women, went away together with his attendants.

The Rudra-aspect in thus reconciled to the Śiva-aspect by making the former the stupendous power of *tapas* which is brought out so that *tapas* may be safeguarded. Śiva, as *tapasvin*[25] emerges as the Supreme Lord in whom *tapas* triumphs by the destruction of *kāma*, erotic love. Subsequently, we shall examine how erotic love changes, through the austere purifying force of *tapas*, into divine love symbolized by the union of Śiva and Pārvatī.

Next, we shall consider the other negative aspect of Śiva which is also related to the Rudra-aspect. Vedic Rudra as a force of death influenced the evolution of Śiva-myths where the god is seen to live in burning grounds. Speaking of this evolution O'Flaherty writes: "In later metaphysical developments death becomes less personal, and Śiva destroys the universe by fire at the end of each era. This cosmic role appears in the later mythology as a kind of necrophilia attributed to Śiva, who frequents funeral grounds and is smeared with the ashes of corpses..."[26].

Not only necrophilia but other attributes of Śiva such as the snakes, the blood-stained elaphant's skin he wears, his nakedness and poverty show an apparent contrast with the Supreme Deity who is the light of all lights, the Lord of yogin.

This apparently death-loving non-aesthetic aspect is also evoked by Kālidāsa in order to reconcile it with the life-loving and aesthetic form of his and give to it a new meaning. The other manifestation of Rudra was for the destruction of Kāma; this one is for an ordeal: Pārvatī's love was to be put to trial to see if it were pure and selfless; if it meant a complete self-abnegation and surrender of all her desires, all her life to Śiva, the Beloved. She too, upto a certain extent, represented *kāma*; she was the instrument of

Kāma. When, through her ascetic practices, she has gradually purified herself, the ordeal comes. It is a temptation.

Śiva appears before her in the form of a young handsome *brahmacārin* who flatters her beauty and her virtue. He says that the person for whom she is thus pining, is surely hard-hearted and arrogant, for otherwise how such beauty and charm can leave him unshaken. And Pārvatī's friend answers that it is Śiva himself who is the object of her love, Śiva who cannot be won by physical beauty; only through *tapas* can one reach that Supreme Status, *uccaiḥ-pada* :

> *tapaḥ kiledaṃ tad avāpti-sādhanam|*
> (5.64)
>
> only is this tapas the means of attaining to that status.

The *brahmacārin* then draws a portrait of Śiva which represents the negative aspect contrasting it with Pārvatī's beauty, noble birth and riches: How can she, who is accustomed in her father's palace to walk on flowerstrewn floors, bear to tread on the rude funeral grounds spread over with the hair of the dead, *vikīrṇa-keśāsu pareta-bhūmiṣu* (5.58).

And again :

> *vapur virūpākṣam alakṣya-janmatā*
> *dig-ambaratvena niveditaṃ vasu|*
> *vareṣu yad bāla-mṛgākṣi mṛgyate*
> *tad asti kiṃ vyastam api trilocane*
> (5.72)
>
> His face disfigured with abnormal eyes! His birth unknown! And his nakedness shows clearly what his possessions are! O you, with eyes like the fawn's, is anything of what one looks for in a husband found in the three-eyed god ?

Finally the exhortation is brought to an end with a strong and beautiful image contrasting the worthlessness and hideousness of Śiva, with the purity, charm, delicacy and beauty of Pārvatī.

The purport of the whole passage (5.65-73) is to dissuade her. If she were attached to the phenomenal aspect of Śiva, she would certainly have given in. But her love has been made pure by the fire of *tapas*, and she replies without the slightest hesitation, each word bearing the stamp of deep conviction[27] :

> *Haram na vetsi nūnaṃ yata evam āttha mām|*
> (5.75)

You surely do not know Śiva since you speak thus to me.

And Pārvatī proceeds to explain the essence of the great God. But her explanation follows no logical path. Here we have a mystical solution of the contradictions in Śiva's character. It is the solution of a lover, a *bhakta*, for whom the paradox is a mystery and no one can find a logical answer to it, for God is not bound by any fixed law[28] :

akiṃcanaḥ san prabhavaḥ sa saṃpadāṃ
tri-loka-nāthaḥ pitṛ-sadma-gocaraḥ|
sa bhīma-rūpaḥ Śiva ity udiryate
na santi yathārthya-vidaḥ Pinākinaḥ
(5.77)

Possessing nothing whatsoever, he is yet the source of all riches; master of the three worlds he yet haunts the funeral grounds; of dire aspect yet is he called Śiva, the auspicious. None is there who knows the real essence af the wielder of the *pināka*.

Pārvatī's whole approach is that of *bhakti*. The resolution of the contradiction in Rudra-Śiva previously discussed is more rational and philosophical; wheras this solution is irrational[29]. O'Flaherty discussing mythological contradictions in the Śiva-myths writes:

"Certain contradictions which can otherwise only be resolved in the ultimate abstraction of philosophy are brought to the emotional and popular level by the myth, and for those problems which cannot be solved rationally at all, the myth utilizes the solution of irrational cult, allowing emotion to achieve what intellect cannot"[30].

Here O'Flaherty deals with mythology, and in the popular mythopoeic world her conclusions are essentially valid. But in Kālidāsa we are on a different level, mythology and philosophy have been combined and transmuted into poetry. And *bhakti* here is of a higher mystical nature than the emotions revealed in popular cults, for the foundation of Pārvatī's love is not a blind faith, but *tapas*, not the feelings of an unregenerated mind but the experience of union. Kālidāsa accepts the mystical solution of *bhakti*. Śiva is satisfied with Pārvatī's reply and reveals his true form, *sva-rūpam* (5.84). This is a key-word; it shows that when the devotee stands face to face with the Beloved, the contradictions and paradoxes, products of the phenomenal and mental world, disappear; God stands revealed in his real nature. With *tapas* the *bhakta* has won him who is the servant of Love. Śiva says to Pārvatī :

adya prabhṛty avanatāṅgi tavāsmi dāsaḥ kritas tapobhir|
(5.86)

O you with stooping limbs, henceforth I am your slave; you have bought me with your *tapas.*

REFERENCES

1. There are some who mistakenly consider Kumāra to be the hero. As we note from the title of the poem itself, Kumāra cannot be its hero. If he were the hero Kālidāsa would not have called the poem "The Birth of Kumāra" but rather something like "The Exploits of Kumāra", *Kumāracarita*, which would then have to deal with the deeds and the exploits of the war-god, especially his fight with the demon Tāraka. As it is, and as the title suggests, the poet was interested in the theme of Kumāra's birth, and naturally the parents became the main characters. Following the same trend of argument we may say that the poem is not, after all, incomplete. Kālidāsa only hints at Kumāra's birth, and artistically it fulfils the the promise of the title. To enter into the medley of mythology around Kumāra's birth would not be warranted here. If suggestion, *vyañjanā*, is the soul of poetry, then here is suggestion enough in the poem to show that the birth of the war-god is an inevitable fact.
2. "Mythical language is much less restricted by logic and common sense. It is full of magic and of paradoxical situations, rich in suggestive image and never precise, and can thus convey the way in which mystics experience reality much better than factual language". Fritjhof Capra, *The Tao of Physics*, p. 44. A poet who wants to suggest meanings lying beyond factual and rational realities can make use of mythology and mythical language.
3. Susanne K. Langer, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
4. Pluralism is nothing but an extended dualism.
5. Cp. "Le moment poétique est en effet celui où les choses cessent d'être reconnues; instant vertigineux où l'on perd pied pour se retrouver tout ā coup de l'autre côté du décor". Jean Onimus, *Op. cit.*, p. 87.
6. Kimon Friar, "*Myth and Metaphysics*", pp. 421-2.
7. G. A. Feuerstein, *The Essence of Yoga*, p. 19.
8. J. Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, II, p. 195.
9. See, Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Śiva*.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.
11. H. Coombe, *Literature and Criticism*, p. 70. Italics mine.
12. Renou translates this verse as follows : "D'avec Rudra, maitre du vaste monde, la nature d'Asura ne saurait être dissociée", in: Jean Varenne, *Le Veda*, p. 126. If *asura* is to be taken here in the Vedic sense of "god" we may accept the translation but that is certainly not what Renou meant, and in that case I am unable to accept *asuryam* as "nature d'Asura". A. A. Macdonell translates it as "divine dominion". (*A Vedic Reader for Students*, p. 63) which he derives from *asu*, "life". This seems to me to be the right direction, for the whole emphasis in the hymn lies

on the aspect of might, of strength; destruction can be a natural consequence of strength but is not necessarily demoniac. Although there are some indications which show that Rudra lives apart from the other gods of the Vedic pantheon, perhaps because of his association with the *vrātya*, yet he is not an enemy of the gods. I have preferred to render *asurya* by "life-dynamism"; this seems to point more clearly to the creative nature of Rudra.

13. These verses are also quoted in *ŚvU.* III.5-6.
14. *ŚB.*, VI.1.3.7-20. See also J. N. Banerjea, *Paurāṇic and Tāntric Religion*, pp. 66ff.
15. Here there is no scope for a detailed study of the Rudra-Śiva relation in the Vedic literature, or in the later mythology. For a brief survey, J. Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, I, pp. 85-89, where a number of other sources of reference are also mentioned. See also Sukumari Bhattacharji, *The Indian Theogony*, pp. 109-157.
16. *MBh.*, 13.146.3.
17. The name *Hara* perhaps denoted in its orlgin, the terrible aspect. See J. Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, I, where he gives the meaning of "Raüber, Zerstörer" (p. 86) and "der Wegraffer" (p. 256). But the word soon came to denote the benign aspect, perhaps under the influence of *Hari* with whom *Hara* is often associated in the notion of *Harihara*. Thus later the word was explained as one who robs man of his ignorance etc., *avidyāder haraṇāt*. (See S. Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upaniṣads*, p. 175). Bernadette Tubini gives the meaning "celui qui subjugue", and adds, "ce mot a des sens nombreux et contradictoires". *La naissance de Kumāra*, p. 39. In *KS.* Hara does not seem to possess any particular significance denoting the one or the other aspect.
18. *KS.*, 3.5; 6.94; 8.7,18,79. Only in Book 3, "The Burning of Kāma" is *Śulin* placed in opposition to *Puṣpacāpa*, Kāma whose bow is made of flowers. But here too the word *jitendriya*, "one who has mastered the sense-organs", qualifying *Śulin* eliminates the destructive aspect. See Bernadette Tubini, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40, for a list of the various names Śiva (with a few omissions) and their occurances in the first seven Books of *KS.*
19. The verse (5.71) has also the word *pinākin*. However, it seems to me that the variant reading *kapālin* is better in this context where Śiva is depicted as poor, naked, ugly, dirty, living in the cremation ground. And the epithet is repeated by Pārvatī in her reply (5.78). The other use of *pinākin* (5.77) does not refer mainly to the Rudra-aspect, but combines the two aspects, for Pārvatī speaks there of the opposite aspects *bhīma-rūpa*, "of terrible form" and *śiva*, "benign".
20. A. A. Macdonell, *A Vedic Reader for Students*, p. 21.
21. See, J. Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, I., p. 89. Gonda finds that the most plausible hypothesis is that of W. Wüst, (*Rudra*, Munich, 1955) who sees the relation of the word *rudra* with the Pāli *ludda*, "cruel; hunter", the Latin *rullus*, "rural" and *rudis* "rough".
22. See Mallinātha's gloss.
23. Though the comparison is not fully elaborated, the moon in this verse suggests evidently *Umā-mukha*, "Umā's face" of the next verse. Umā or Pārvatī, we should remember, is still the instrument of Kāma, for the gods wanted to use Pārvatī as the means of seduction instead of an *apsaras*, in order to shake Śiva's steadfastness so that he would consent to marry Pārvatī and beget a son destined to be the saviour of the gods.

24. We have the word *marut* again. Mallinātha glosses *marutām devānām*. He takes *marut*, as it is often done in the sense of the gods in general. This seems indeed to be the implication here, for by the death of Kāma the hope of all the gods was baffled, not merely of the class called *marut*. Kālidāsa uses *Rudra* (pl.) and Marut (pl.) as the particular groups of gods living in Indra's heaven (2.25, 26) without any special reference to Rudra-Śiva; they are there mythical gods among other gods.

25. Notice in the verse just quoted (3.74) the emphasis laid on the word *tapasvi*.

26. W. D. O'Flaherty, *op. cit.*, p 83.

27. The strength of this conviction is revealed by the bare directness of the words she says. Such bareness is indeed rare in classical Sanskrit poetry.

28. Pārvati's reply being long I do not quote the whole passage. The reader will certainly profit by going through the whole passage (5.75-83).

29. W. D. O'Flaherty calls *bhakti* the irrational solution (*op. cit.*, p. 38). From a philosophical standpoint it is indeed so, but from the religious and mystical standpoint of *bhakti* who should perhaps call it suprarational. Let us also note here the association of contraries which is one of the means poets and mystics employ in order to express experiences which lie beyond the rational mentality. See, R. Sarkar, *La poétique de Sri Aurobindo*, pp. 331-2.

30. W. D. O'Flaherty, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

CHAPTER IV

THE POETIC RECONCILIATION : ASCETICISM-EROTICISM

Life creates opposites, but these opposites are not always exclusive of one another ; they are two points of view which have their place in nature.

More than the duality Rudra-Śiva, the duality *kāma-tapas* had a tremendous repercussion on Indian culture. In the study of Indian culture the encounter with this pair of opposites is sometimes quite baffling. Nevertheless, we have to admit that this antinomy has to a large extent contributed to make the image of India what it is.

Śiva combines within his very self the erotic aspect as well as the ascetic. When we look superficially and hurriedly, we fail to grasp the relation between the two. In the myths there is perhaps no need, nor any effort, to reconcile them. But so conscious an artist as Kālidāsa, could surely not leave them unreconciled.

On the other hand, Kālidāsa, a product of his culture, a poet who accepts reality in order to transcend it, would not curtail the globality of the Śiva-concept by denying one of the features. Moreover, the whole poem is founded on the tension that exists between *kāma* and *tapas*.

In order to grasp the significance of this duality and the poetic reconciliation thereof, we should perhaps see briefly what are the implications of this tension in Indian culture in general—the culture which made the Kālidāsian world-picture.

We find as early as the Ṛgveda the coupling of the two concepts : In the beginning, says the seer of the Hymn of Creation (X. 129), there was neither existence, *sat*, nor non-existenee, *asat*. The dualities did not exist, all was indistinguishable, undifferentiated, *apraketam*. Creation is the division of this undifferentiated state. Out of that by the power of *tapas* arose the One, *tad ekam*. This One is the primary principle of creation, it is the

brahman, *tat sat*, of the knower; it is God, *īśa*, *saḥ*, Śiva, Puruṣottama, Kṛṣṇa, of the lover. Thus the division which is at the origin of creation arose, the *sat* and the *asat* became differentiated. But the seers wanted to know what it was that linked together the opposites. And, "seeking in their hearts", they discovered the principle of Desire, *kāma*.

> tucchenābhv apihitaṃ yad āsīt tapasas tan mahinājāyataikam
> kāmas tad agre sam avartatādhi manaso retaḥ prathamam yad āsīt
> (X. 129.3-4)
>
> That One which was hidden within the void, took birth by the power of *tapas*, ardour. At first arose *kāma* (desire) which was mind's first seed.

If we read these lines carefully, we find that *tapas* and *kāma* are the same principle, but going in different directions. Tapas is the force of energizing that goes from the manifest to the unmanifest. In the vision of the Vedic seer, it seems, *kāma* is the linking principle that belongs to this world, to the human mind and with the help of which creatures of this world will be able to unite with the Supreme.

We should also notice the definition of *kāma* given here. It is *manaso retaḥ*, mind's semen. Both *tapas*, heat, and *retas*, semen, are physical concepts but used metaphorically to denote mental or spiritual concepts. However, we should remember that they are not just metaphors; for later, in various methods of yoga-practices and austerities, the heat of the sun or the fire is used as well as sex-energy. Poetically too, these principles are important.

In this hymn, *kāma* is not just sexual desire, but the word *retas* has already established its relation with the sexual desire; this meaning will gradually predominate. And it will be the word *tapas* which will denote the energy and the practice by which the manifested creature will be able to regain his divine status and experience his union with the Absolute.

We may also say that *kāma* was in the beginning desire and the fulfilment of desire, as it is said in the Atharva Veda,

> ka idam kasmā adāt kāmaḥ kāmāyādāt
> kāmo dātā kāmaḥ pratigrahītā... (III. 29.7)
>
> Who gave this and to whom? Kāma gave it to Kāma. Kāma is the giver, Kāma the receiver.

But perhaps for the sake of clarity and analytical knowledge the two principles were separated and the principle that led to the fulfilment was called *tapas*.

In another hymn of the Atharva Veda, Kāma seems to be identified with the Supreme Deity, the first born. He is the goal towards which gods, fathers and men aspire :

> Kāmo jajñe prathamo nainaṃ devā āpuḥ pitaro na martyāḥ
> tatas tvam asi jyāyān viśvahā mahāṃs tasmai te Kāma namo it
> kṛṇomi (IX. 2.19)

> Kāma was born first; neither gods nor the Fathers nor men have reached him. You are greater than all these, great in all directions; I bow down to you, O Kāma.

Here it would seem that the seer identifies Kāma with the highest God.[1] In the same hymn, we read that Kāma is called *ugraḥ, īśānaḥ*, (IX.2.3), powerful, sovereign, two epithets which are later commonly used for Rudra-Śiva.

This brief exposition shows that from the Vedic age both *tapas* and *kāma* were associated with the highest God. Both the words have undergone semantic changes, but from the mythological and religious literature we can see that all the various levels of meaning remained associated with the two most important names by which later Hinduism has referred to God : Śiva and Kṛṣṇa.

In the later age gradually *tapas* came to be regarded as superior to *kāma*, and *tapas* came to bear within itself, as opposed to *kāma*, the meaning of sexual abstention. In the Vedic age already a distinction was made between worldly life of *kāma* and *vitta*, sex and wealth,[2] and asceticism, renunciation of both sex and wealth. The Upaniṣadic thought, recognized the analytical distinction, but did not fully disjoin them. Thus the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad says that the Self was alone and without delight, therefore he created out of himself the husband and the wife,

> sa imam evātmānam dvedhāpātayat tataḥ patiś ca patnī cābhavatam
> (I. 4. 3)

> He made the Self to fall apart in two and from there arose the husband and the wife.

The same Upaniṣad considers the union between the two as a sacrifice; the physical act is a symbol, an allegory of the religious ritual (VI. 2. 13; VI. 4). Philosophically too the Upaniṣadic sages have tried to give a higher meaning to *kāma* in order to resolve the dichotomy. The resolution is of two kinds. The ignorant man thinks that he is incomplete without wife and wealth; but the wise know what completeness is :

tasya kṛtsnatā mana evāsya ātmā vāg jāyā prāṇaḥ prajā cakṣur mānuṣaṃ vittaṃ cakṣuṣā hi tad vindate śrotraṃ daivaṃ śrotreṇa hi tac chṛṇat. (BAU I. 4. 17)

His completeness : mind is indeed his self, speech his wife, life-breath his offspring; the eye is his human wealth for he discovers it with the eye; the ear is his divine wealth for he hears it with the ear.

This solution is really a refusal of the worldly life and an option for the ascetic.[3] But the other solution accepts the worldly life within a greater vision of the self.

na vā are patyuḥ kāmāya patiḥ priyo bhavati ātmanas tu kāmāya patiḥ priyo bhavati. na vā are jāyāyai kāmāya jāyā priyā bhavati ātmanas tu kāmāya jāyā priyā bhavati...na vā are vittasya kāmāya vittaṃ priyaṃ bhavati ātmānas tu kāmāya vittaṃ priyaṃ bhavati...(BAU. II. 4. 5)

Not for the love of a husband, lady, is a husband dear, but for the love of the Self is a husband dear. Not for the love of a wife, lady, is a wife dear, but for the love of the Self is a wife dear. (...) Not for the love of wealth is wealth dear but for the love of the Self is wealth dear.

The Īśa Upaniṣad also takes a synthetic view and says that *bhoga*, enjoyment, should be done in a spirit of *tyāga*, renunciation :

tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā (verse 1)
therefore by renunciation you should enjoy[4]

But already some Upaniṣadic teachers had placed asceticism above enjoyment and thus prepared the ground for the excessive world-denial of the Buddhists.

etaṃ vai tam ātmānaṃ viditvā brāhmaṇāḥ putraiṣaṇāyāś ca vittaiṣaṇāyāś ca lokaiṣaṇāyāś ca vyutthāya atha bhikṣācaryaṃ caranti. (BAU. III. 5. 1)

Having known that Self, the knowers of the *Brahman* rise above the desire for sons, wealth and worlds, and live on alms.[5]

A similar statement is made also in the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (I. 2. 11) : They who follow after austerity, *tapas*, and faith, *śraddhā*, in the forest, living the life of a mendicant, *bhaikṣācaryaṃ carantaḥ*, go through the sun-gates to where the immortal, the imperishable Puruṣa dwells.

Buddhism, however, brought about the total severance of asceticism from eroticism, of *tapas* from *kāma.* Nevertheless, society and the creative artists

did not accept asceticism as the only way of life. The concept of the four stages of life, *āśrama*, which had its origin in the pre-Buddhist age, served at the revival of Hinduism in the post-Buddhist period, as a model for the total enjoyment of life culminating in the highest human ideal of *mokṣa*.

It is not true that only the ignorant people still clung to the life of desires; the wise, the intellectual, the artist and even some sects of mystics did not wholly reject eroticism. We shall not here discuss the general implication of this dichotomy in society; we shall limit ourselves to the world of poetry, mainly to that of Kālidāsa's, and try to find out how he has sought to reconcile the opposites.

We have given a background of the evolution of this dichotomy; we shall now attempt to unravel in order to understand better the purport of KS, some important trends and ideas which were perhaps at work at the time of Kālidāsa.

An important development in literature is the division between religious and secular writing. Upto the age of the two great epics, Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata, this division did not exist. Both Vālmīki and Vyāsa were ṛṣi whose words had the ring of true conviction and bore the weight of authority. Vālmīki's Rāma and Vyāsa's Kṛṣṇa are not just *dhīrodātta nāyaka* of the later classical drama and epic, but incarnations of God, or at least far above the ordinary man. Vālmīki and Vyāsa were creators of God-men, their poetry came from the very source of life-experience; but in the classical age the living experience had given place to an intellectual curiosity. The earlier experiences were recognized and accepted as basic traditions on which the society founded its ideologies. It is an age of curious intellect, of tremendous vitality, of urge for self-expansion, of art and aesthetic creation, of intellectual, philosophical and scientific seeking. It is an age of exploration, but of exploration with the mind, not the spiritual and religious exploration. The religious literature flows in other directions, in the Purāṇa and the Tāntric literatures. But these have very little aesthetic appeal. "The great poets and writers are secular creators and their works have no chance of forming part of the intimate religious and ethical mind of the people as did Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata."[6]

This division is perhaps the reflection of the division between what we have called *tapas* and *kāma*. The apparent basis and the fundametal *rasa*, aesthetic principle, is *śṛṅgāra* or erotic sentiment. But *kāvya* was not all eroticism. For society in which this *kāvya* grew up recognized two schemes of life from the earlier period in which life was seen more integrally. These

schemes are : the four human interests, *catur-varga*, viz. desire and enjoyment, *kāma*, with eroticism at the centre; material and economic aim, *artha*, with wealth, *vitta*, at the centre; *dharma*, ethical and religious aim with *saṃskāra*, sacraments, at the centre; and finally *mokṣa*, spiritual liberation with *tapas* at the centre. These four aims fall in fact into two groups, the first three belonging to the secular life and the fourth being the ideal of religious or spiritual life. Therefore, one speaks, in relation to the life in society, not of *catur-varga* but of *tri-varga*.

Mokṣa is therefore opposed to *kāma*, *artha* and even *dharma*. Does not Kṛṣṇa say, Abandon all *dharma* and take refuge in Me alone.

sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekam śaraṇam vraja (Gītā. XVIII, 66).

The second scheme showed to man the way to realize in life this fourfold aim; this is the scheme of the four *āśrama* or stages of life: stage of the student which laid the groundwork and prepared the individual for the realisation of the *catur-varga*; stage of the householder where he could serve the first three objects of life; stage of the recluse or forest-dweller, where he gradually liberated himself from social obligations as he gathered deeper knowledge and also imparted this knowledge to the students; lastly the stage of the free man the wanderer, *parivrājaka*.

But as the separation between asceticism and worldly life was quite powerful and as *mokṣa* was the final aim, some people naturally considered the other objects of life as useless sqaundering of energy. This tendency, however, had not the full sanction of the society which had moved away from the exclusive other-wordliness towards the full exploitation of this-world's gifts. Intellectual curiosity, desire for learning[7], polished speech, material luxury, aesthetic taste created a class of people, the *nāgaraka*[8], for whose enjoyment much of the poetry and art was produced. In this society morality and asceticism seemed to have receded to the background. But when we read the classical works we find in what great esteem the writers held the ascetic, the forestdweller[9]. "It was a time", writes Sri Aurobindo, "in which one might expect to meet the extremes of indulgence side by side with the extremes of renunciation...."[10].

Poets and writers like Kālidāsa, Bhartṛhari, Bhavabhūti, who were also the intellectual leaders of society could not and would not accept the ascetic solution which would be the death of all artistic and intellectual activity. But they had to grapple with the problem of the two extremes. Bhartṛhari found it difficult to reconcile the two ideas, the three *śataka*, centuries of poems, are a poignant document of his mental conflict; after the extremes of

vairāgya, renunciation, and *śṛṅgāra*, eroticism, he seems to resort to a kind of ethical scepticism in rules of life, *niti*. But Kālidāsa's reconciliation is of a different nature. His is a poetic-symbolic resolution, not direct and spontaneous as of the epics, but subtle and hidden. We have to look deep, read the text closely and intensely in order to grasp the elements of this synthesis. In Kālidāsa's poetry India's "ethical and domestic ideals, the life of the ascetic in the forest or engaged in meditation and austerity upon the mountains and the life of the householder, her familiar customs and social standards and observances, her religious notions, cult, symbols" provide "the surroundings and the atmosphere"[11].

It is this atmosphere that we have to grasp from Kālidāsa's use of metaphors and symbols, from associations which are not always to be found on the surface.

Our endeavour will be to analyse how Kālidāsa has evoked the conflict between the first three objects of life, *kāma*, *artha*, *dharma*, and the final object, *mokṣa*. This triple conflict can be represented as (a) sex vs. sexual purity; (b) destitution vs. plenty; (c) dharmic rites vs. tapas.

(a) *Sex vs. Sexual Purity* :

In order to apprehend this duality in respect to the Śiva of KS who is Īśvara, we have to analyse firstly the Śiva-figure itself, and secondly the Kāma-figure and its relation to Śiva.

Kālidāsa has made no mystery of the fact that Śiva is the Supreme Light beyond darkness—*paraṃ jyotis tamaḥ-pāre vyavasthitam* (KS.2.58), showing at once that Śiva is the Supreme, That One, *tad ekam* (RV.X.129) who came into being out of the primordial darkness which in the beginning was hidden by darkness : *tama āsit tamasā gulham agre* (RV.X.129.3) Yet,—or rather because of this, for nothing can exist outside of him,—he carries the opposites within himself. This supreme light, *jyotis*, is contrasted with the word *retas* of the previous verse of KS. Who can, says Brahmā, oppose the terrible demon Tāraka, "except a portion dropped of Śiva's seed",

amśād ṛte niṣiktasya Nīlalohita-retasaḥ (KS. 2.57).

Further Indra uses similar words to describe Pārvatī : she is, says he to Kāma; *tad-vīrya-niṣeka-bhūmiḥ* (3.16), "receptacle for the pouring of his (Śiva's) seed". *Retas*, *vīrya*, semen, represents sexuality, whereas an ascetic is *urddhva-retas*, one who has the seed drawn up in chastity. In Hindu psychology *retas* and *ojas* stand at the two extremes like *kāma* and *tapas*; however, we should note that *ojas* is nothing but *retas* sublimated. *Ojas* is luminous energy, *jyotis*.

When one speaks of *ojas* or *jyotis* the ascetic aspect is stressed, with a hint at the bipolarity and final reconciliation of the two,

> Umā-rūpena te yūyaṃ saṃyama-stimitaṃ manaḥ
> Śambhor yatadhvam ākraṣṭum ayas-kāntena lohavat (2.59).
>
> Therefore, like a magnet which attracts iron, you should try to attract Śambhu's mind which self-restraint has made steady, with Pārvatī's beauty.

Saṃyama, self-restraint, is one of the moral abstinences well-known in yoga; this means the control over the sense-organs and over *manas*, mind, which is the seat of desire. Śiva is thus depicted as the ascetic who has appeased, *stimita*, his mind. In contrast, we have Pārvatī's beauty, *Umā-rūpa*. Beauty is not necessarily sensuous; it can be the expression of the spirit, but Pārvatī's youthful beauty, at least before she begins *tapas*, is an instrument of Kāma, *Kāmasya astram* (1.31), and as such is opposed to sexual purity. Pārvatī's beauty is compared to Rati's (3.57). Rati, the wife of Kāma, is the personification of sex-attraction; and Kāma thinks that such beauty cannot fail to evoke desire in Siva's heart. The whole intention here is anti-ascetic; it reminds us of the temptations of ascetics by the *apsaras* who were used by Indra in order to bring about the downfall of the ascetics. The motif of temptation is again repeated when Indra asks Kāma to make Śiva fall in love with Pārvatī.

> tasmai Himādreḥ prayatāṃ tanūjāṃ yatātmane rocayitum yatasva (3.16)
>
> Strive to make him who is self-restrained, fall in love with the devout daughter of the Mountain.

The emphasis is laid on the ascetic character of Śiva; he is *yatātman*, whose self is under control.

That Pārvatī, or to be more precise, her youth, *vayas*, is first meant as Kāma's instrument is clearly evinced by Kālidāsa in the vivid description of her growth :

> asambhṛtaṃ maṇḍanam aṅga-yaṣṭer anāsavākhyaṃ karaṇaṃ madasya
> Kāmasya puṣpa-vyatiriktam astram bālyāt paraṃ sātha vayaḥ prapede
> (1.31)
>
> Then, going beyond childhood she reached her youth,—youth which beautified her tender stalk-like body without any ornaments, which intoxicated without any liquor, which was Kāma's arrow not made of flowers.

After this the poet goes on to describe with luscious words and images,

with an intense sensuousness the physical beauty of Pārvatī; rhythm, music, colour, all combine to depict her not as the goddess, mother of the universe, but as the most desirable of women. Her body is the temple of desire, her waist the altar of desire. Kālidāsa has beautifully developed this image of Pārvatī as Kāma's votary :

tasyāḥ praviṣṭā nata-nābhi-randhraṃ rarāja tanvī nava-loma-rājiḥ
nīvīm atikramya sitetarasya tan-mekhalā-madhya-maner ivārciḥ
madyena sā vedi-vilagna-madhyā vali-trayaṃ cāru babhāra bālā
ārohanārthaṃ nava-yauvanena Kāmasya sopānam iva prayuktam
(1.38-39)

The thin streak of soft down, broken loose from the bounds of her garment, and plunged in her deep navel, shone like the flame of the blue central gem of her girdle.

The waist of the girl was like an altar; there she had three lovely folds which, it seemed, were set there by her new-born womanhood as steps for Love's ascent.

When we take these two verses together we get a beautiful picture of the adoration of Kāma. The god of love rises to the altar which is Pārvatī's waist and the sacrifice, *yajña*, is performed. The first verse suggests the sacrifice. The deep navel is the *yajña-kuṇḍa*[12], the soft down, like the flame from the jewel, is the sacrificial fire.

That Pārvatī is a weapon of Kāma is again suggested :

śirīṣa-puṣpādhika-saukumāryau bāhū tadīyāv iti me vitarkaḥ
parājitenāpi kṛtau Harasya yau kaṇṭha-pāśau Makara-dvajena (1.41)

Her arms which Kāma, the fish-bannered god, even after having been vanquished, used as a noose round Śiva's neck, are, I imagine, more tender than śirīsa flowers.

The metaphor is taken from the battlefield. This is indicated by the word *parājita*, vanquished, by *pāśa*, noose which was a recognized weapon in the ancient warfare. And even Makara-dhvaja, fish-bannered, has a martial connotation, because in a battle the heroes had their banners flying on the chariots. Associated with this, the simile of the śirīsa-flowers acquires a new significance. Kāma has five flower-arrows: *aravinda, aśoka, cūta, nava-mallikā* and *nīlotpala*; *śirīsa* is not one of his weapons. Kālidāsa however suggests that *śirīśa*-flowers are also his weapons, not arrows but nooses, *pāśa*. And Pārvatī's arms are compared with these flower-weapons.

When we bear in mind these considerations the verse (2.59) reveals to us very poignantly the contrast between *kāma* and *saṃyama*. Pārvatī's physical

beauty with all its charm and sensuous perfection is in the service of Kāma. It is only later that she becomes aware of this and blames her beauty -*nininda rūpam* (5.1).

Though there are some suggestions and intimations about the inherent eroticism in Śiva, yet the picture that Kālidāsa draws of him upto the Book 5, is that of an ascetic, *tapasvin*. Nevertheless there are implications enough to show that this asceticism is not eternal. It is clearly said that he began his austerities after the death of his previous wife, Satī, Dakṣa's daughter. Now he is a *saṃyamin* (3.44), self-restraint; *jitendriya* (3.57), one who has conquared the senses. These epithets too show that asceticism is not his eternal nature; even in the beautiful description of Śiva, the great yogin, absorbed in meditation (3.45-50), we find passages which reveal erotic undertones. Let us consider the verse (3.48) already quoted. (13)

> Like a cloud without the menace of rain, like an ocean without surging waves, subduing the Maruts who roam within, (Śiva sat), an unflickering flame in a windless place.

The similes explicitly show that the passions were there but subdued by the yogic practice of breath-control, *prāṇāyāma*. That this is only a repression and not a complete mastery is shown later, when Śiva is disturbed by the presence of Kāma and Pārvatī. The calm ocean is seen to be troubled:

> Haras tu kiṃcit parilupta-dhairyaś candrodayārmbha ivāmbu-rāśiḥ
> Umā-mukhe (...) vyāpārayāmāsa vilocanāni. (3.67)

> Hara, his calm slightly disturbed, like the ocean's when the moon rises, fixed his eyes on Pārvatī's face.

But the ascetic regains control over himself. And after having powerfully restrained the tumult of the senses, *indriya-kṣobham...balavan nigṛhya* (3.69), he discovers Kāma, standing near. And the fire of his third eye, the fire of *tapas*, destroys the god of love. And Śiva quickly disappears in order to get away from the presence of women, *strī-saṃnikarśaṃ parihartum icchan* (3.74). This is the victory of asceticism; but it is not the solution; it is an escape; it is not a reconciliation, but only the world-denial of the ascetic.

Kālidāsa does not accept this escapist solution. The next appearance of Śiva is here significant. He appears before Pārvatī who has undertaken the yoga of self-purification, in the guise of a *brahmacārin*. He is an ascetic, but it is only a semblance, only a front, which he discards at the end of this encounter. He assumes his own form,

sva-rūpam āsthaya ca tāṃ kṛta-smitaḥ samālalambhe... (5.84)

and assuming his own form he held her smiling.

There is no denial, but there is no acceptance of the unregenerate passions either. We shall see by and by what this *sva-rūpa*, own form, really means, and what means his acceptance of Pārvatī.

The conflict is also expressed in the relation between Kāma and Śiva. We should remember that although Kāma is here depicted as a god different from Śiva, yet psychologically he is a part of Śiva himself, he is in Śiva's mind, as in the mind of every creature. This psychological implication is concretely shown by Kālidāsa himself. When at the presence of Pārvatī Śiva's senses are disturbed, he looks round to find out the cause and sees Kāma standing. This looking outwards is also a self-awareness, he 'sees' in himself the origin of the disturbance and recognizes it as *Desire*. Consequently, Kāma's relation with Śiva will help us to understand the latter's eroticism.

Kālidāsa introduces Kāma in his double role, that of the enemy of *tapas* (3.4-6) and that of the fulfiller of desire (3.7-8). The two roles are not independent of each other; they show that the whole world is subjugated by desire. Says Kāma to Indra :

prasīda viśrāmyatu vīra vajraṃ śarair madīyaiḥ katamaḥ surāriḥ
bibbetu moghīkṛta-bāhu-vīryaḥ strībhyo 'pi kopa-sphuritādharābhyaḥ
(3.9)

Have no misgivings, O hero! Let your thunderbolt rest ! (Say), the strength of what enemy of gods should my arrows render so unavailing that he quails even before women when their lips quiver in anger ?

Kāma is not afraid to measure his strength even with Śiva's who is the supreme ascetic. He rashly brags that he can even disturb Śiva's steadfastness, *kuryāṃ Harasyāpi...dhairya-cyutim* (3.10). Indra too recognizes his strength and tells him what he has been called for : only a son born of Śiva's semen, *vīrya-prabhava*, can vanquish the demons who have dethroned Indra, enslaved the gods and established his reign in heaven. But Śiva is at present immersed in the Absolute, *brahmaṇi yojitātmā*, so that the task is not going to be an easy one. Kāma has to pitch all his might against *tapas*. But Indra says that Kāma too is great, and one flower-arrow from his quiver will vanquish Śiva,

sa ca tvad-ekeṣu-nipāta-sādhyo brahmāṅga-bhūr brahmaṇi yojitātmā
(3.15)

And he whose mind is fixed in Brahman can be vanquished with one arrow shot by you, born of the *Brahman* (or Brahmā).[14]

Mythologically, Kāma is said to be born from the mind of Brahmā,[15] and metaphysically he is the first-born after *sat* was separated from *asat*, therefore the first manifestation of the *Brahman*. Now, Indra seems to say in this verse: Śiva is mighty through *tapas*, as his heart is fixed in the *Brahman*, but Kāma, you too are great, for you are born of the Brahman. When we adopt this meaning the whole verse brings intensely to the fore the whole duality between *kāma* and *tapas*, the two forces born from the same original source.

The antagonism is further emphasized by the introduction of Spring, *Madhu*, the friend and associate of Kāma; Spring, the pride of Kāma, *abhimāna-bhūta*, is an obstacle to the ascetic practices, *tapaḥ-samādheḥ pratikūla-vartī* (3.24). This antagonism is vehement, there seems to be no possibility of compromise, for Kāma wishes even at the cost of his body's annihilation *aṅga-vyāya*, to succeed in overpowering the force of *tapas*. That there can be no solution to this antagonism is already foreshadowed here,—the word *aṅgavyāya* is a bitter dramatic irony when we think of the burning of Kāma's body by the fire of Śiva's wrath.

This is not a reconciliation; Kālidāsa could accept this solution neither as a householder, *gṛhastha*, nor as a poet. We have to look still further for the solution. Kālidāsa gives us two modes of reconciliation, the first, the solution of the householder, the social man; the second, that of the poet who has grasped intuitively the meaning of the cosmic existence.

Kāma should be acknowledged and supported by *dharma*[16], i.e. valid law of action recognized by the *śāstra*, scriptures. All lawbooks uphold that the *trivarga* should be harmonized in the life of the householder[17]. Manu says that the foundation of life is the triple-object: *tri-varga iti tu sthitiḥ* (2.224). But both *kāma* and *artha* should be guided by the principle of *dharma*. For as it is said in KS, *dharma* is the essence of the three objects of life, *dharmaḥ* ..*tri-varga-sāraḥ* (5.38). This is also in conformity with the teaching of the Gītā, though the highest ideal there is to go beyond *dharma*. The Gītā at first condemns *kāma* as a force of destruction (II.62-63), an enemy, *vairin* (III.37), which must be destroyed, *prajahi* (III.41). But later Kṛṣṇa says :

dharmāviruddho bhūteṣu kāmo 'smi (VII.11)
in creatures I am desire which is not contrary to *dharma*.

The first acceptance of *kāma* in society is through *dharma*. Kālidāsa has made this clear through the anecdote of the *brahmacārin* who, he says, is like the personification of the first stage, *āśrama*, of life, *śarīra-baddhaḥ prathamāś-ramo yathā* (5.30) Śiva appears before Pārvatī as a young student, *brahmacārin*.

Brahmacarya is the first stage of life, after which comes the *gārhastya*, the stage of the householder. *Brahmacarya*, the stage of ethical, religious and intellectual preparation based on various disciplines of which sex-abstinence is one of high importance. In fact, the word itself later came to mean sex-abstinence. At the end of this period the adult man married and took his place, along with his wife, *saha-dharminī*[18], to pursue, in accordance with *dharma*, the three objects of life. Pārvatī has also become purified through the discipline of self-purification. She is now fit to be Śiva's *saha-dharminī*; she has proved the superiority of *dharma* over *kāma* and *artha*. Says the student :

> anena dharmaḥ sa-viśeṣayam adya me tri-varga-sāraḥ pratibhāti bhāvini
> tvayā mano-nirviṣayārtha-kāmayā yad eka eva pratigṛhya sevyate (5.38)
>
> Divesting your mind of the desire for *artha* and *kāma*, you pursue *dharma* alone, therefore, O noble lady, *dharma* appears to me to be the essence of the three objects of life.

Here in fact is the choice that the *brahmacārin* has made,—to enter into the life of the householder; *dharma* is the householder's highest ideal, *kāma* comes as a part of his *dharma*; it does not become an absolute and independent principle; passion is canalized through the social institution of marriage. The idea of marriage and marital union is also cleverly suggested to the reader in the foltowing verse. The irony is grasped by the reader alone, not by Pārvatī :

> prayukta-satkāra-viśeṣam ātmanā na māṃ paraṃ saṃpratipattum arhasi
> yataḥ satāṃ saṃnata-gātri saṃgataṃ manīṣibhiḥ sāptapadīnaṃ ucyate
> (5.39)
>
> You who have shown me special hospitality should not consider me as a stranger; for, it is said, O tender-limbed girl, that friendship grows between good people when they have taken seven steps together (or, have exchanged seven words).

The keyword here is *sāptapadinam*. There are two evident meanings which are meant for Pārvatī : *pada* meaning both 'word' and 'step', this word may either mean 'when seven words are spoken' or else 'when seven steps have been taken together'. These are evident meanings. But the attentive reader grasps at once a suggestion which is evoked by the word. We know that *sāpta-padī* is a well-known rite in Hindu wedding: "the bride and bridegroom walk together seven steps, after which the marriage becomes irrevocable".[19] When we have grasped this association, the whole verse gets a new meaning. This is an example of the technique of suggestion of which Kālidāsa is an unsurpassed master.

We have already seen that at the end of this scene Śiva holds Pārvatī—*taṃ samālalambe* (5.84). This holding is nothing but accepting her as his bride, and here too we have the association of the *pāṇi-grahaṇa*[20] rite in Hindu marriage.

The Book 6 deals with the wedding explicitly, in accordance with *dharma*; we have there many allusions to the enjoyment of desire, subordinated and purified by *dharma*. Arundhatī, the wife of the sage Vasiṣṭha is presented as the ideal wifehood incarnate; at her sight Śiva's desire for a wife becomes stronger; and he sees that the basic cause of the pursuit of *dharma* is a good wife.

tad-darśanād abhūc Chambhor bhūyān dārārtham ādaraḥ
kriyāṇāṃ khalu dharmyāṇāṃ sat-patnyo mūla-kāraṇam. (6.13)

Seeing her (Arundhatī) Śiva's desire for a wife became stronger : good wives, it is true, are the first cause of religious duty.

The poet says again that it was *dharma* that led Śiva towards Pārvatī. By this we have to understand that what Kāma could not achieve, *dharma* did. And the poet adds that the mind of Kāma became glad when considerations of *dharma* made Śiva decide to marry Pārvatī. (6.14) This gladness in Kāma's mind (he has no body) hints at his resurrection. But here we think not of the all-powerful Kāma of Book 3, the primitive power of passion, but Kāma chastised, and sanctified by *dharma*.

This brings us to the marriage of Śiva. The *brahmacārin* is now ready to enter the stage of the householder; this step has to be taken according to the precepts of *dharma*. The Book 6 shows that *ācāra*, social conduct as laid down by the *smṛti* and the *śruti* is the meaning of *dharma*. The description of the wedding starting with the appointment of the seven *ṛṣi* by Śiva exhibit *dharma*, of which Manu has said :

ācāraḥ paramo dharmaḥ śrutyuktaḥ smārta eva ca (I. 108)

Conduct as ennunciated by the *śruti* and the *smṛti*, the revealed and the traditional texts, is the highest *dharma*.

Even the idea that deeds performed by sages become *ācāra*[21] is clearly stated by Kālidāsa when he tells the seven *ṛṣi* :

bhavat-praṇītam ācāram āmananti hi sādhavaḥ (6.31)

for good men teach the (rules of) conduct prescribed by you.

That marriage is *dharma* and the householder should consider it as such, is aptly expressed by the poet :

ata āhartum icchāmi Pārvatīm ātma-janmane
utpattaye havir-bhoktuḥ yajamāna ivāraṇim (6. 28)

Therefore, for the birth of a son I wish to marry Pārvatī, as the sacrificing priest wants wood for the generation of fire.

We can grasp from the image of the sacrifice the poet's intention. The similitude is not altogether new,[22] but Kālidāsa has utilized this in order to evince the deep-rooted association that lies behind the sacrament of marriage in Hindu society. By this *kāma* is incorporated in the religious framework of the Hindu society in which "chastity and sexuality are not opposed but symbiotic,...the man who lives happily with his wife is performing a sacrament in his very life, if he but realize it".[23]

Within the field of *dharma*, sexual enjoyment and chastity are not incompatible, although, because of the stress the world-negating aspects of Indian philosophy have laid upon renunciation and abstention, there is a sense of shame, if not of sin. The Vedic *ṛṣi* did not know this contradiction, and they were not world-negating ascetics. But later all *ṛṣi* were considered *tapasvin* with the added attribute of those who follow sexual abstention. The seven *ṛṣi* are of Vedic origin, they are married. Kālidāsa through the marriage of Śiva justifies also their marriage and tries to reconcile the contradiction and efface the sense of shame that is attached to married life. Kālidāsa even insinuates that *kāma* sanctified by *dharma* is superior to dry austerities. Says Kālidāsa :

tasmin saṃyaminām ādye jāte pariṇayonmukhe
jahuḥ parigraha-vrīḍām prājāpatyās tapasvinaḥ (6. 34)

When he, the foremost of the self-restrained, became eager to marry, those ascetics, Prajāpati's sons, abandoned their shame for having taken wives.

The idea that there is no shame in *kāma* when sanctified by sacrament is emphatically expressed by the poet; he shows the eagerness of Śiva waiting to make Pārvatī his wife. Days without her seem to pass very slowly :

tāny ahāni kṛcchrād agamayad adri-sutā-samāgamotkaḥ (6.95)

longing to unite with the Mountain's daughter he found it difficult to pass those days.

Next we are shown Śiva's marriage. All rites and sacrifices are performed with the perfect regard for *ācāra*, and as the ceremony proceeds, we notice that the poet gradually prepares to resuscitate Kāma. This is a new

birth in the presence of the sacrificial fire; nothing is concealed; there is no deception. Kāma grows in Pārvatī's heart which is purified by *tapas*. Pārvatī is no longer Kāma's missile; on the contrary, Kāma is the slave; and the couple consents, so to say, to accept the influence of Desire. The growth of Kāma is beautifully pictured as the first mango twigs that sprout in Spring. The copper-red colour of Pārvatī's fingers reminds us of the copper-red tender leaves of the mango-tree which is closely associated with Kāma and the season of Spring. Pārvatī's body is the soil purified by *tapas*, is which the seed of Love lay concealed. We are shown here the germination of Love which will grow into a perfect tree. It is indeed a lovely image of Love's regeneration that Kālidāsa gives us.

tasyāḥ karaṃ śaila-gurūpanitaṃ jagrāha tāmrāṅgulim Aṣṭa-mūrtiḥ
Umā-tanau gūḍha-tanoḥ Smarasya tac-chankinaḥ pūrvam iva praroham
(7.76)

Śiva took (the bride's) hand which the Mountain, her father, offered him,—the hand the fingers of which were like the first burgeons of Love who, for fear of Śiva had hidden himself in Pārvatī's body.

This is the ceremony of *pāṇi-grahaṇa*; all the rites are carried out with the utmost regard for *dharma*; and finally the officiating priest says at the conclusion of the ceremony that the goal of marriage is attained by the pursuit of *dharma* at the side of the husband. He addresses the bride thus :

Śivena bhartrā saha dharma-caryā kāryā tvayā mukta-vicārayeti
(7.83)

Abandoning all doubts, follow the path of *dharma* with your husband Śiva.

Kāma can now grow fully; the time for his resurrection is near. Within the scheme of the *tri-varga*, *kāma* resurrected is allowed to resume his function; Śiva permits him to shoot his flower-arrows even at him.

tasyānumene bhagavān vimanyur vyāpāram ātmany api sāyakānām
(7.93)

His anger gone, the blessed Lord, allowed the action of (Kāma's) arrows on himself.

Such is the first solution which reconciles *kāma* and *tapas* within the socio-religious framework of the three objects of life.

We come now to the other solution, the poetic-symbolic one. This is not the solution of the householder who accepts *kāma* in the total enjoyment

of life in order to discharge his duty towards his family, his society, his religion. Neither is it the solution of the ascetic who would be content with the burning of Kāma and would not accept his ressurrection.

This solution which we shall endeavour to elicit now, is that which is arrived at through the global world-vision of the poet; the poetic imagination, *pratibhā*[24] of the poet does not see the world or life or nature as fragments but as a dynamic whole. He does not spurn anything; he discovers the unsuspected relations between things which may even be contradictory when seen from a rational exclusivist standpoint.

Both *kāma* and *tapas* are forces that Indian thought has recognized as manifestations of the Real. In Śiva we have seen the existence of both these powers; he has not, in his exemplary role of a householder, denied *kāma*, only subordinated it to *dharma*. But he has denied *tapas*. *Tapas* would then seem to be only the preparation for the accomplishment of *dharma* and enjoyment of *kāma*. From this, one may even draw the conclusion that chastity only enhances desire; and the negation of desire is nothing but the preservation and accumulation of sex-energy for an intenser eroticism.[25]

But if it were so, we would either have to reject the Book 8 of KS, where we are given a frank picture of sex, as spurious, as some critics have done, or wonder aghast at the downfall of Śiva, the great ascetic. The simple devotee, with his beliefs in myths, with his blind acceptance of all that is associated with the name of his *iṣṭadevatā*, the tutelary deity, will perhaps not question such an incongruency.

It is true that the poetry there is of very high quality; but the objections which later Indian critics have put forward would certainly have occurred in the poet's mind. One of the objections is that voiced by Mammata many centuries later.[26] Moreover we can conclude from Kālidāsa's other works that he was himself a Śiva-worshipper who, though far from being a sectarian, considered Śiva and Pārvatī as the parents of the universe.

jagataḥ pitarau vande Pārvatī-Parameśvarau (Raghu, 1.1)

I bow down to Pārvatī and the Supreme Lord Śiva, the parents of this moving world.

Neither can this Book be justified by the previous analysis in which we have shown the inclusion of *kāma* in the *tri-varga*. If such was the poet's intention, this Book would be superfluous, because the previous Book shows this fully. More of *kāma*[27] covering a whole Book, would be artistically unwarranted, when we see so little of *dharma* itself to preoccupy the poet.

True, he mentions the ascetics who perform their religious duties (8.48) which reminds Śiva of his own evening rites, *sandhyā* (8.50).

The casual manner in which Kālidāsa says this, points out very clearly that this is not of much value. It is a duty which has to be done, to set an example to the people. The word *api* in *iśvaro' pi*, 'the Lord too', shows its connection with the verse (8.47) where Śiva sees the ascetics; and it almost seems that the whole practice means very little to himself, but is performed for the religious education of the social man.

And certainly, Kālidāsa did not want to supply easy pornography. We have therefore to explore the implications hidden in this Book. We shall see that here Kālidāsa gives us the real reconciliation between *kāma* and *tapas*. We shall later take up this question fully, for we shall show that this reconciliation has a wider connotation than only the resolution of eroticism and asceticism; it is the union between God and the World, between Spirit and the individual Soul, between Puruṣa and Prakṛti, Īśvara and Śakti. We shall however note immediately that the Book 8 has four specific movements which clearly represent the four *puruṣārtha*; *kāma*, *artha*, *dharma* and *mokṣa*. The verses 1 to 20 show the love-play of Śiva and Pārvatī in Himālaya's house; this is the first level of *kāma* which is definitely brought to an end by the poet with the following words :

evam indriya-sukhasya vartmanaḥ sevanād anugṛhīta-Manmathaḥ
śaila-rāja-bhavane sahomayā māsa-mātram avasad vṛṣava-dvajaḥ
(8.20)

In this way, Śiva, the bull-bannered god, showing kindness to Kāma by pursuing the path of sensual pleasure, passed with Pārvatī, a month only, at the home of the Mountain-king.

The poet speaks here of *kāma* in its grossest expression, that of *indriya-sukha*, pleasure of the senses. This is the first stage in which *kāma* is all-important; it is eroticism pure and simple; and one can try to find out how closely the poet follows the *Kāma-śāstra*.

The verses 21-28 represent the second level of *kāma* which is subordinated to *artha*; eroticism is a part of the greater material and vital enjoyment. Expressions like *hema-pallava-vibhaṅga-saṃstara*, 'bed of broken gold-leaves'; the lush and voluptuous scenery which reminds one of the rich house of a *nāgaraka*, the water-sport (8.26); the wearing of pārijāta-flowers by Pārvatī in her hair (8.27) : all insist on the value of *artha*. *Kāma's* nature too is different here; the poet does not describe the love-act, as in the first move-

ment, but speaks more of the vital pleasures of love : *kaṇṭha-sakta-mṛdu-bāhu-bandhanaḥ* (8.24) "who was bound by tender arms clung round his neck." The whole passage gives us the powerful impression of richness; this is also suggested by describing the Mount Kailāsa as the mountain of Kubera, the god of wealth, *eka-piṅgala-giri* (8.24) ; although it is also the dwelling of Śiva himself. Even the *cāṭukāra*, flattering courtier, who is the inevitable appendix to the rich, is not absent,

> tasya jātu malaya-sthalī-rater dhūta-candana-lataḥ priyā-klamam
> ācacāma sa-lavaṅga-keśaraś cātukāra iva dakṣiṇānilaḥ (8.25)

> Once when he was making love (to Pārvatī) on the Malaya-hills, the southern breeze, fragrant with the pollens of lavanga-blossoms, the breeze which shook the branches of sandal trees, removed the weariness of his beloved, as if it were a flattering courtier.

And in the end the poet says clearly that Śiva, in company of his wife, enjoyed heavenly and earthly pleasures which certainly mean the pleasures of *kāma* and *artha* :

> ity abhaumam anubhūya Śaṃkaraḥ pārthivaṃ ca vanitā-sakhaḥ sukham....
> (8.28)

> ...thus, after having enjoyed the pleasures heavenly as well as earthly in company of his wife...

The third movement comprises of the verses 29 to 50. From the very first verse we know for sure that this represents *dharma* : this is adduced by the word *saha-dharma-cāriṇi* (8.29). 'she who accompanies in the pursuit of *dharma* : the wife'. And, as we have noted earlier, we find at the close of this movement the picture of the ascetics—who are really followers of *dharma*, for they are *vidhi-vidaḥ*, knowers of prescribed rules—performing the religious rites. Śiva then says to Pārvatī :

> tan muhūrtam anumantum arhasi prastutāya niyamāya mām api (8.48)
>
> You should therefore permit me too, to perform the prescribed rites.

And finally, says the poet,

> īśvaro 'pi divasātyayocitaṃ mantra-pūrvam anutasthivān vidhim
> (8.50)
>
> And, with (the muttering of) mantras, the Lord too observed those rites which were proper to the evening.

The word *vidhim* echoes *vidhi-vido* of 8-47; and stresses the fact of prescribed customs, of *ācāra*, which are fundamental to the concept of *dharma*, as generally it is traditionally understood.

We also see the implication of the sun-symbol in this passage. The whole movement is dominated by the setting sun, which symbolizes duty, *dharma*. The next movement (51-91), on the contrary, is dominated by the moon-symbol. It is not difficult to grasp the meaning: moon's association with the Śiva-concept makes it easily the symbol of Śiva himself; Śiva, the Supreme God, who is not bound by *kāma*, *artha* or *dharma*, who is free from all social or religious duties, from all contradictions. The metaphor of the last verse demonstrates that the forces of *kāma* and of *tapas* which are both fiery forces in different aspects, are resolved in the great heart of the Eternal Calm, in the *śānta*, which is not an extinction of the fire, but an intenser, although perhaps mysterious, enjoyment, like the concept of the Īśa Upaniṣad—*tena tyaktena bhuñjithā* :

na sa surata-sukhebhyaś chinna-tṛṣṇo babhūva
jvalana iva samudrāntar-gatas taj-jalaughaiḥ (8.91)

As the fire inside the ocean is not quenched by the rolling waters, likewise his (Śiva's) thirst for love-making was not quenched.

(b) *Destitution vs. Plenty*

After this opposition between sex and sexual purity, we shall take up the opposition between destitution and plenty which is also inherent in the Śiva-concept. The opposition is here between *artha* and *vairāgya*, renunciation. Kālidāsa has made elaborate use of the first opposition; this second one is not so conspicuous in this poem, although we have indications enough which enable us to grasp the underlying implications.

The contrats, firstly, is seen in the figure of Śiva himself. It is, moreover, brought into relief by opposing Śiva to Himālaya, in the same manner in which, in the case of sex vs. sexual purity, it was done by setting the figure of Kāma against Śiva. Himālaya is a king, and Kālidāsa has waxed eloquent in the description of his riches, first in the portrayal of the physical mountain, then in unfolding the splendid picture of the Himālayan capital, Oṣadhiprastha.

From the very begining the poet shows us the shining jewels, *bhāsvanti ratnāni* (1.2), which were, according to ancient myths, milked from the Earth-cow with Himālaya as the calf. The mountain is the source of infinite riches,

ananta-ratnv-prabhava (1.3). Kālidāsa however does not overlook the fact that not only the glittering jewels but cold white snow also covers the summits. Because of this the poet foresees possible criticisms which may be advanced against the good fortune, *saubhāgya*, of the Mountain. He therefore adds immediately, that though this may be considered a fault, yet one single fault, *doṣa*, gets lost in his innumberable qualities, *guṇa*.

> ananta-ratna-prabhavasya yasya himaṃ na saubhāgya-vilopi jātam
> eko hi doṣo guṇa-saṃnipāte nimajjatīndoḥ kiraṇeṣv ivāṅkaḥ (1.3)
>
> Snow has not been able to ruin the good fortune of him who is the source of infinite riches : for one single defect gets lost in the abundance of qualities like the moon's spot in the midst of its rays.

We should also notice the parallel that the poet draws between the opposites *ananta-ratna* and *hima* on the one hand, aud *guṇa* and *doṣa* on the other, emphasizing the fact that *ratna* represents the biggest virtue of Himālaya[28]. Not only other words, such as *dhātumatta* (1.4), richness of minerals, *muktāphala* (1.6), pearl, but the whole description evokes an atmosphere of richness and luxury.

We come next to the description of the capital, Oṣadhiprastha, of king Himālaya, a city that vies in wealth with the city of Alakā, the capital of Kubera, and with heaven itself :

> Alakām ativāhyaiva vasatiṃ vasu-saṃpadām
> svargābhiṣyanda-vamanaṃ kṛtvevopaniveśitam (5.37)
>
> It looked as if Alakā, the city resplendent with riches, was carried away and laid down there, as well as things and people that Heaven had not the capacity to hold.

Then follows (verses 38-46) a vivid picture of wealth and voluptuousness. It shows the richness and splendour ; its magnificence brings more acutely home the destitution of Śiva. And later Śiva himself, in the guise of a *brahmacārin*, voices eloquently the difference between the richness of Pārvatī's life in her father's house and the life of poverty which she will have to lead if she persists on marrying the pauper-god. In the eye of the world these opposites cannot be resolved ; Śiva pleads the case against himself with much pauṣity and keenness enumerating the differences.

> tvam eva tāvat paricintaya svayaṃ kadācid ete yadi yogam arhataḥ
> vadhū-dukulaṃ kala-haṃsa-lakṣaṇaṃ gajājinaṃ śoṇita-bindu-varṣi ca
> (5.67)

iyaṃ ca te 'nyā purato viḍambanā yad ūḍhayā vāraṇa-rāja-hāryayā
vilokya vṛddhokṣam adhiṣṭhitaṃ tvayā mahā-janaḥ smera-mukho bhaviṣyati (5.70)

Consider this yourself: should one ever put, by some means or other, these two things together,—the bridal garment as white as swans and the elephant's hide dripping with blood. And another nuisance is in store for you: Seeing you, newly wedded, who deserve to be borne by the king of elephants, mounted on an old bull, eminent people will curl their lips in smile.

It is not difficult to see how vigorously the poet has penned the contrast. But this contrast is not merely between Śiva's poverty and the wealth outside of him. If it were so, the decision would only be a question of choice between the life of plenty and the life of poverty. But what Kālidāsa aims at is a reconciliation where the two are not reallly opposites. So, we have to look further. The first answer which we are given, is a mythological-philosophical solution, in the episode of the transformation of Śiva's ornaments, when he goes as the bridegroom to the royal palace. In Book 7 we see first the preparations for the wedding in the palace and the city of Himālaya. The city's royal roads are strewn with flowers, silken flags flutter in the breeze, golden portals are erected to welcome the bridegroom (7.3). The room in which the bride is being bathed has a sapphire floor inlaid with pearls; the water is poured from golden jars (7.10) and the sacred altar where the wedding will take place in front of Agni, the witness-fire, has a canopy supported by four jewelled pillars (7.12).

This wealth is now matched by Śiva's. Kailāsa, the dwelling of Śiva, is called the mountain of Kubera (7.30). The *mātṛkā*, the mother-goddesses, are shown to place before the bridegroom all sorts of articles of decoration. But Śiva refuses to wear them; his poverty cannot be replaced by wealth from outside. His own ornaments, snake, skull etc. change themselves miraculously into jewels. The ashes on his body become white unguent, the elephant's hide is changed into beautiful silk (7.32). Such is the mythological solution; it is a magic and a mystery. Philosophically, we seem to be told, that both the poverty and the wealth are apearances; they have no essential reality but are phenomenal only.

The next level of resolution is that of *bhakti*, mysticism. This is typified by the attitude of Himālaya, who wants to give Pārvatī, with all her riches, as alms to the god of poverty. (He did not know then that Śiva would appear royally dressed). He tells his daughter :

ehi viśvātmane vatse bhikṣāsi parikalpitā (6.88)
Come, child, you are the alms given to the Soul of the World.

Himālaya is, like the Upaniṣadic kings, such as Janaka, one who enjoys the world without attachment. Wealth is there to be used at the service of *dharma*.

The attitude of Pārvatī is also significant. She abandons all riches, abandons the comfort of the royal palace in order to be like her Lord. Or, we may rather say that riches, which may be seen as an obstacle (in the tradition of *vairāgya*) to the attainment of the goal, slips from her being spontaneously freeing her from the bondage of worldly riches. This is very subtly suggested by the poet. After Himālaya has given his consent to the marriage, Pārvatī approaches Arundhatī to bow down before her. And the poet who is always ready to grasp the minutest suggestion, notes :

tam praṇāmādara-srasta-jāmbūnada-vataṃsakām
aṅgam āropayāmāsa lajjamānām Arundhatī (6.91)

When she bowed in respectful salutation her gold ear-rings dropped down from her ear; she was all abashed—and Arundhatī took the bashful girl on her lap.

How beautifully, the whole solution is suggested. The gold ear-rings drop from her ears. She is now, so to say, free from the bondage of wealth and ready to be Śiva's companion. After this, although she is richly adorned for the wedding, yet those jewels have no real significance for her. Moreover, we are also shown earlier, how she considers Śiva's poverty. To the *brahmacārin* who has painted with the crudest realism Śiva's poverty, she, purified by *tapas* retorts vehemently with all the passion and fire which perhaps only a woman can muster. However the retort shows that it is still the solution in renunciation, *vairāgya*, not the real synthesis : the element of refusal is very much predominant. In reply to the *brahmacārin*'s assertion that Śiva loves inauspicious things and rites, *amaṅgalābhāsa-rati* (6.65) she replies :

vipat-pratikāra-pareṇa maṅgalaṃ niṣevyate bhūti-samutsekena vā
jagac-charaṇyasya nirāśiṣaḥ sataḥ kim ebhir āśopahatātma-vṛttibhiḥ
(5.76)

People who are determined to remedy their misfortune and anxious to acquire riches, resort to auspicious rites (*maṅgala*); he, the pure Being, the protector of the world, who wants nothing, what need has he of such rites which pollute the soul's movements with craving !

Then follows the mystical *bhakti*—solution which mocks at rationality :

akiñcanaḥ san prabhavaḥ sa sampadām tri-loka-nāthaḥ pitṛsadma-gocaraḥ
sa bhīma-rūpaḥ śiva ity udiryate na santi yāthārthya-vidaḥ Pinākinaḥ
vibhūṣaṇodvāsi pinaddha-bhogi vā gajājinālambi dukūla-dhāri vā
kapāli vā syād atha vendu-ṣekharam na viśva-mūrter avadhāryate vapuḥ
(5.77-78)

Though destitute, he is the origin of all riches; though he lives in funeral grounds, he is the lord of the three worlds; though he is terrible to look at, he is called Śiva, the benign;—there exists none who knows what the Pināka-bearer really is.

Whether it be glittering with ornaments or covered with snakes, whether it be dressed in an elephant's hide or else wearing a silk garment, whether it bear a skull or the moon for a diadem, this form of him whose embodiment is the universe, cannot be apprehended by anyone.

Such is here the resolution : Śiva is the Supreme Lord, God of *bhakti*;—the solution is one that the heart dictates. Here too there is the religious mystery, but it is not blind faith ; it is intuitive recognition. He is above our understanding, he is above the ordinary conception of poverty and riches; though he apparently has nothing, yet even the heavenly gods, upholders of riches and might, fall at his feet with their crowned heads (6.81). *Bhakti*, faith, religious recognition, tears up the barrier of misunderstanding that reason creates by positing the contrary aspects.

But as in the case of the first contradiction, so too here, the final resolution, which is Kālidāsa's, comes in Book 8 : the divinisation of wealth : not rejection but integration of it in a greater scheme of world-vision[29].

(c) *Dharmic rites vs. tapas.*

As in the case of *kāma* and *artha*, so too in the case of *dharma* the contradiction exists. *Dharma* or socio-religious duty has its place in the world-order; it is the force that upholds society and ensures stability,[30] without it society would fall apart. The social man has his duty towards his family and fellowmen, his ancestors and God. To do one's duty according to the rules laid down either by the scriptures or by the tradition is to practice *dharma*. But when one wants to go beyond the law of conduct dependent on external status, and rise to a liberated status where rules of conduct are replaced by the free law of God, there appears a conflict. This is the conflict

between the *dharmic* man and the *saṃnyāsin*; between the practice of prescribed rites and the practice of *tapas*.

The contradiction between the socially recognized *dharma*, and *tapas* is seen, as in the other two cases, in the character of Śiva himself. Moreover here it is also shown by placing Pārvatī,—the Pārvatī before her *tapas*—in opposition to the ascetic Śiva.

At first, Śiva is introduced to us as the great ascetic; he has renounced the world after the death of his former wife Satī (1.53); he has severed his bonds with society; he is no longer bound by *dharma*. Bur here comes Pārvatī, sent by her father, to serve Śiva.

> anarghyam arghyeṇa tam adri-nāthaḥ svargaikasām arcitam arcayitvā
> ārādhanāyāsya sakhī-sametāṃ samādideśa prayatāṃ tanujām (1.58)

> To him who is beyond all oblations, to him who is adored by the dwellers of heaven, the protector of the mountains paid his homage and sent his daughter eager (to serve), along with her girl-friends, to wait upon him.

We find that Himālaya and Pārvatī and even the gods represent the social religious aspects (the words used here: *arcitam, arcayitvā, ārādhanāya*—belong to religious rites). This is again emphasized in the description of Pārvatī's daily duty :

> avacita-bali-puṣpā vedi-saṃmārga-dakṣā
> niyama-vidhi-jalānāṃ barhiṣāṃ copanetrī
> giriśam upacacāra praty-ahaṃ sā su-keśī
> niyamita-parikhedā tac-chiraś-candra-pādaiḥ (1.60)

> Day after day, that lovely-tressed girl, gathered flowers for his worship, (31) scrubbed and cleaned neatly the altar, fetched *kuśa*- grass and water for the daily rites: thus did she attend upon Śiva; she knew no fatigue, for it was removed by the rays of the moon that, Śiva bears on his head.

This worship however is not enough to get Śiva, who is beyond all rites. So Pārvatī undertakes *tapaş*. Here too we find the conflict voiced by Menā, Pārvatī's mother:

> manīṣitāḥ santi gṛheṣu devatās tapaḥ kva vatse kva ca tāvakaṃ vapuḥ (5.4)

> There are, at home, divinities who can fulfil your heart's desire. Why then, child, this *tapas* so unlike (the delicacy of) your body.

Here too we find implied the opposition between rites and *tapas*. The gods who are at home, *gṛha-devatā*, *kula-devatā*, are desired by social man; they are worshiped regularly, and if Pārvatī wants a god she may worship the home-deities, and may get one as her husband. Śiva is seen by Menā as a divinity not of the homes, not to be attained by cult-worship, and she seems to reject him; for at home, in the society, one does not need such a god. But later Menā too accepts Śiva gladly when he comes as the bridegroom, in the metamorphosed state of a worldly person; one who seems to have accepted the social ideal of *tri-varga*.

In the character of Śiva the contrast is marked when we see him first as the ascetic, then as the householder. As a householder, along with *kāma*, and *artha*, he accepts also *dharma*, with all its *vidhi*, prescriptions, and *ācāra*, customs, as we have already seen. However we should notice that this contact is not as acute as the other two. Firstly because in the general conception of a *tapasvin* there is also the idea of *dharma*. Although for the *tapasvin* himself the ritual practices are perhaps not of much intrinsic value; yet he, as one who has to show the rules of conduct to the social man, must accept, for the benefit of the people, *loka-hitāya*, the *dharmic* acts.

We see therefore that in and around the character of Śiva and to a certain degree, in that of Pārvatī, are present three important dualities which have marked the Indian culture very strongly. We have tried to find out different partial reconciliations as suggested by Kālidāsa. But the poet goes further and in the last Book suggests a synthetic vision in which the opposites are embraced into a vast synthesis. But that synthesis has other implications too. For the hero and the heroine, the man and the woman, represent in some ways opposite trends, ideas and visions. We shall now try to grasp the implications of this duality before we can intelligently discuss about the Kālidāsian resolution.

REFERENCES

1. Commenting on this hymn Maurice Bloomfield writes, "In the philosophical hymns of the Atharvan, and in the disquisitions of the Upaniṣads, this Kāma, the creative desire (not sexual love, as in AV. III, 25), takes a place among the very numerous primeval cosmic forces, and appears as one form of the tentative monotheistic personifications of primeval force; it then does not differ materially from 'the one' (*ekam*), 'the being' (*sat*), and the more vigorously personalised Brahmā, Prajāpati, Viśvakarman, Svayambhū etc.". *Hymns of the Atharvaveda*, pp. 521-2.
2. In this chapter we shall speak of the important paradox of the Śiva-concept which is that of destitution and plenty.
3. Cp. BĀU. IV. 4. 22.

4. Sri Aurobindo's comments : "The renunciation demanded is not a moral constraint of self-denial or a physical rejection, but an entire liberation of the spirit from any craving after the forms of things". *Isha Upanishad*, p. 75.
5. Hermann Oldenberg thinks that this is the earliest mention of Indian monasticism. "...von diesen Brahmanen, die den Ātman erkennend zu Bettlern werden, führt die geschichtliche Entwicklung in gerader Linie zu Buddha hin, der die Seinen und Hab und Gut verlässt, um im gelben Mönchskleide heimatlos wandernd der Erlösung nachzutrachten". *Buddha*, p. 36.
6. Sri Aurobindo, *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, p. 296.
7. R. N. Dandekar, "Some Aspects of Gupta Civilization".
8. Vātsyāyana gives a good description of the nāgaraka, the man about town, Kāmasūtra, I. 4. See also S. K. De, *Ancient Indian Erotics and Erotic Literature*, pp. 18-20, 96f ; A. B. Keith, *op. cit.* pp. 51-2 ; Krishna Caitanya, *A New History of Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 24-25.
9. V. Raghavan, *Sankrit Poetry and Indian Thought*, p. 477.
10. Sri Aurobindo, *Kalidasa*, p. 225.
11. Sri Aurobindo, *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, p. 300.
12. A hollow in the ground to receive the sacrificial fire.
13. In the previous chapter, p. 50.
14. I have taken the form *brahmāṅga-bhūr* as a vocative, addressed to Kāma by Indra. Commentators are hesitant about its meaning, though all take it as a nominative form, attribute of *saḥ* (Siva). Mallinatha explains it as, *brahmanāṃ sadyojātādi-mantrāṇām aṅgānāṃ hṛdayādi-mantrāṇāṃ bhuḥ sthānaṃ*, "repository of the principal and accessary *mantras*" (tr. M. R. Kale). Kale says in his notes, "It is difficult to know what this exactly means. Different commentators have given different interpretations. The meaning that would readily suggest itself to the mind is- 'born of Brahmā, (and some commentators have taken it in that sense. *Brahmaṇaḥ aṅga-bhūḥ. Brahmano 'ṅgāt bhūr utpattir yasya*, i.e. Rudra)" M. R. Kale, *Kumārasaṃbhava*, Notes, p. 56. Kale notes further the interpretation of the commentator Charitravardhana who takes the compound as a *bahuvrīhi*, and interpret also as Śiva, he whose son is Brahmā. Kale records however one commentator who takes the epithet as applied to Kāma. But he takes *saḥ* as replacing *senānī* which occurs in an accusative singular form in the first line. His commentary is as follows, *yad vā sa senānīḥ tvad-ekeṣu-nipātena sādhyaḥ utpādanīyaḥ. Kīdṛśaḥ ? Brahmaṇā niyojitaḥ ātmā yotno yasmi saḥ. Yataḥ tvaṃ Brahmāṅgabhūḥ*. p. 57. This seems to be somewhat clumsy. In any case, the compound should be applied to Kāma, and not to Śiva.
15. Kāma is born from the heart of Brahmā. Alain Daniélou, *Hindu Polytheism*, p. 312, W. G. Wilkins, *Hindu Mythology*, p. 256 ; *hṛdayāt kusumāyudhaḥ*, *Matsya*-p. 3.10.
16. It is not an easy task to define *dharma*. Much has been written on the subject. P. T. Raju, in the "Glossary of Indian Philosophical Terms" at the end of his book, *Idealistic thought of India*, gives a number of English equivalents : law, nature, rule, ideal, norm, quality, entity, truth, element, category. p. 445. This list does not exhaust all the implications of *dharma*. In the present context I shall quote a few remarks of Sri Aurobindo, "The Dharma, at once religious law of action and deepest law of our nature, (...) it is the right law of functioning of our life in all its parts (...) There must be in all things some wise and understanding standard of practice and idea of perfection and living rule,—that is the one thing needful

for the Dharma. A lawless impulsion of desire and interest and propensity cannot be allowed to lead human conduct ; even in the frankest following of desire and interest and propensity there must be a governing and restraining and directing line, a guidance". *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, p. 104.

17. V. Raghavan, *op. cit.*, p. 468.
18. This word shows how important *dharma* was in the life of a householder. The wife was not just *kāminī*, object of desire, she was indispensable for the right pursuit of his highest religious duties.
19. See V. S. Apte, *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, and Krishnachandra, *Purohita-darpaṇa*, I, p. 20.
20. Krishnachandra, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
21. Manu says that the conduct of good people is also a standard of *dharma*, *ācāraś caiva sādhūnām* (2.6). See also Vātsyāyana, *Kāmasūtra*, I. 2-8.
22. See BĀU. VI. 2. 13 ; VI. 4.
23. W. D. O'Flaherty, *op. cit.*, p. 254.
24. For a discussion of *pratibhā* according to the Indian poetics see, Ramaranjan Mukherjee, *Literary Criticism in Ancient India*, pp. 160ff. J. Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets* ; T. N. Sreekantaiya, "Imagination in Indian Poetics", and Elizabeth Christie, "Indian Philosophers on Poetic Imagination".
25. Such is the conclusion at which O'Flaherty arrives through her study of the Śiva-myths. See *op. cit.*, pp. 164-5.
26. Moriz Winternitz, *Geschichte der Indischen Literatur*, III, p. 57, fn.
27. *Kāma*, like *artha* and *dharma*, are the first steps towards the final culmination of the mystical union.
28. That this verse opposes riches to poverty was also understood by a later anonymous poet who retorted :
eko hi doṣo guṇa-saṃnipāte nimajjatīty etad ayuktam uktam
tenāpi nūnaṃ kavinā na dṛṣṭaṃ dāridryam ekaṃ guṇa-pūga-hāri.
Vallabhadeva, *Subhāṣitāvali*, No. 3439.
29. We shall discuss this in chapter VIII.
30. Kale suggests in his notes that Śiva performed the rites and Pārvatī made the preparations only. He refers *nigama-vidhi* to Śiva, "The fixed rites Śiva had to perform as required by the particular form of penance he had been practising..." (*op. cit.*, Notes, p. 30).
But this interpretation is not clearly suggested by the poet. Pārvatī performs the rites of worship and gathers all that is necessary for the cult. She worships the visible Śiva as many Hindu girls have often worshipped his image to get a husband like him. But even if we accept Kale's interpretation it would only mean that *tapas* is preceded by rites which must be superseded in order to attain inner concentration. Dharmic rites represent only a preparatory stage.

CHAPTER V

MAN AND WOMAN

dvidhā kṛtvātmano deham ardhena puruṣo 'bhavat ardhena nārī
(Manu. I. 32)

Splitting his body into two, with one half he (Brahmā) became the man, with the other half the woman.

prakṛtiṃ puruṣaṃ caiva viddhy anādī ubhav api (Gītā. XIII. 20)

Know that *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* are both without beginning.
And similarly writes our poet in KS in the praise of Brahmā by the gods:

strī-puṃsāv ātma-bhāgau bhinna-mūrteḥ sisṛkṣayā (2.7)

Man and woman are parts of your own self,-of you who split your form with the desire to create.

These verses refer to a fundamental idea of Indian cosmogony which has its tremendous repercussion in philosophy too. The Absolute, undifferentiate, beyond time and space, divides itself into the so-called male and female principles which lie at the very root of creation. In fact in all created reality we find the two principles; firstly the principle in essence or the idea-in-itself, secondly the dynamic working in manifestation. Metaphysically this bipartite principle is found in the concepts of Brahman-Māyā, Puruṣa-Prakṛti, Īśvara-Śakti. Poetically as well as mystically, the male-female relation is very dynamic and fruitful. This is a concretization of an idea which in itself is abstract, and hardly congenial to poetry. The concretization reveals the idea as a palpable reality; and the division brings forth the possibility of an interplay, of a certain dramatic and poetic tension. Thus we find, in poetry and in mysticism, the image of the bride and the bridegroom, of the husband and the wife, of the lover and the beloved.

Kālidāsa, we have already seen in the previous chapter, makes great use of bipartite relations. In this chapter we shall study some other relations

which are concretized as the dual male-female principle. In KS we meet with four different couples; if we closely investigate them we find that they fulfil a structural purpose in the whole Kālidāsian world-scheme. The couples we discover in the poem are: (i) Kāma-Rati; (ii) Himālaya-Menā; (iii) Vasiṣṭha-Arundhatī, (iv) Śiva-Pārvatī. Of these four pairs, the first and the last are very intimately connected; there is an intense interaction between them; these occupy also the greatest part of the poet's attention. But as pairs the other two, though minor in importance, have nonetheless a significant role. When we have read the poem carefully, and are also aware of Kālidāsa's predilection for the fourfold life-scheme, *catur-varga*, it is not difficult to ascertain that these four couples are respectively the concretizations of *kāma*, *artha*, *dharma* and *mokṣa*.

We shall now consider these different couples and investigate how Kālidāsa has poetically analysed and intensified the four concepts each in its double aspect of essense and manifestation, in its male, *puruṣa*, form and its female, *nāri-prakṛti*, form. The male aspect represents the truth of a reality in its conceptual representation; there is no change or modification there. It is the eternal principle which lies beyond the immediacy of perception and action in the realm of absolute figuration. On the other hand the female aspect is that which manifests in the natural world the eternally underlying male aspect in a concrete form or working, perceptible to the senses, seizable in its manifold expressions or figurations. If the first is comparable to the soul or the self, the second is to the body and its dynamism.

(i) *Kāma-Rati*

At this point it is no longer necessary to reiterate that the embodied Kāma is the personification of the world-pervading Desire, the first of the *puruṣārtha*. Kāma is the male principle as defined earlier; the essence that is the Universal Desire; but this Kāma which inhabits the heart of every creature has also its manifested female counterpart, Rati, mythologically the wife of the Love-God. Rati[1] is delight in desire, is passion, is also sexual union. Rati is the expression and the foundation of Kāma; she is the ground on which Kāma flourishes.

We need not here reconsider fully the meaning of Kāma. We shall only search for Rati's relation to him and how she stands in respect to her male counterpart. When the gods learned from Brahmā that their plight would come to an end only through the leadership of Śiva's son, they thought of Kāma, the principle of Desire personified. There was still no question of action; Indra met Kāma and commanded him to use his powers against

Śiva's asceticism. It is only at that point, at the inception of action, that we meet Rati. We also meet with another person, Kāma's friend Vasanta, spring, season of beauty and delight. But Vasanta is not a counterpart of Desire; he is only a helper, one who prepares the ground for the manifestation of Kāma and Rati.

Kāma arrives at the mountain-abode of Śiva. He has now to manifest himself, express himself as a force, a dynamism. Therefore not only is Kāma's presence, as the essence of Desire, necessary but also Rati's, because here it is a matter of effectuation, *kārya-siddhi* (3.23) and not just of principle. That Rati's presence along with Kāma's leads to the explicit manifestation of love and sex is specified in the following couplet:

> taṃ deśam āropita-puṣpa-cāpe Rati-dvitīye Madane prapanne
> kāṣṭhāgata-sneha-rasānuviddhaṃ dvandvāni bhāvaṃ kriyayā vivavruḥ
> (3.35)

> When Kāma, accompanied by Rati, and carrying his flower-box, reached there, pairs expressed through their behaviour the feeling of love which had become highly passionate.

We see here that Kālidāsa has unequivocally pointed to the aspect of expression or manifestation. The phrase, *dvandvāni bhāvaṃ kriyayā vivavruḥ*, shows the complete expression of the essence of Kāma. In fact here we have two expressive grades of Rati. Rati is the dynamism of Kāma, the 'becoming' of Kāma: this is the first expression; then she is also the personification of the outward expression of love in nature as kissing, mating etc. The word *bhāva*, derived from *bhū*-"to become" gives the first stage, but it exists still as a potential dynamism. The second stage is the uncovering of this potential force in action: expressed here by the words *kriyayā vivavruḥ*, "unfolded through action; expressed through behaviour."

In this connection, we may also note the word *bhāva* in the context of Indian poetics. Mallinātha in his commentary on this verse hints at this context: glossing the word he writes, *raty-ākhyaṃ śṛṅgārabhāvam*: the *bhāva* here is 'erotic sentiment known as *rati*'. It is only when *śṛṅgāra*, eros, becomes capable of expressing itself in poetry or in life that it becomes an erotic *bhāva*, or to be more precise a *sthāyi-bhāva*, named by the rhetoricians as *rati*[2]. The concrete expression of the *sthāyi-bhāva*, are the *anubhāva*, which are visible, physical expressions or actions. The word *kriyā* used by Kālidāsa, would correspond to the word *anubhāva* of the rhetoricians,

The idea of manifestation, in the above couplet is strikingly brought to the fore by the word *vivavruḥ*, 'uncovered'. With a masterly stroke Kālidāsa has shown to us the true nature of Rati, Kāma's female aspect, or, to use the Sanskrit philosophical terms, Kāma's *śakti* or *prakṛti*.

After Kālidāsa has established the role of Rati, we are shown the unfolding of her activities in the behaviour of animals and plants, the whole nature, so to say, expresses her dynamism, the abundant outflow of her might. The god of love too becomes active. Rati has shaken into life all nature, but there is only Śiva who sits deep in meditation, unperturbed. In his heart too must grow the *rati-bhāva*. Everything points to the bursting out of *rati*,-even the presence of Pārvatī. But the dramatic change is sudden, unexpected and significant. The lord sits above nature, unfettered by nature's laws. Therefore Kāma's destruction is inevitable. He is burnt by Śiva's ire. If the essence perishes can manifestation remain? Can Rati live without Kāma? Kālidāsa gives us a poetical-psychological answer to this question which we have now to survey.

After the destruction of the essence, the outward manifestation can perhaps continue for a brief period, to live on mechanically, through the sheer force of inertia, or by the mysterious decree of Providence. Such seems to be the trend of development that Kālidāsa depicts in the Book of Rati's Lamentations (Book 4). We are not here concerned with the high pathos that has found an intense but sober expression in this book, an expression which is typical of Kālidāsa, calculated, refined, yet without any fastidiousness of the later poets. What we must envisage is the state of Rati without Kāma.

Already in the previous Book, when Kāma, is reduced to ashes by the fulgurating look of the terrible Rudra-Śiva, we are shown Rati fallen in a swoon, her senses stunned :

...vṛttiṃ mohena saṃstambhayatendriyāṇām... (3.73)
by the swoon which paralysed the function of her sense-organs...

This shows the ineffectualness of Rati's functioning when Kāma as the sustaining principle is absent. But this is not the destruction of the *rati*-principle, for she regains here consciousness ; or rather, to be more faithful to the text and to the poet's intention, we should say that Providence brought her back to consciousness. The poet seems to evade a logical solution. It is the mysterious decree of Providence, *vidhi* (1.4), which sustains for a while the manifested aspect. But we should notice that the dynamism which Rati represented is there no more. She has no outgoing function ; she is brought back to consciousness only to experience this terrible separation which is

bound to lead logically to complete annihilation without the intervention of any supralogical power.

That this continuation of Rati is mechanical and lifeless is also hinted at by the poet. He cleverly suggests that the soul-principle or life-principle that animated Rati was Kāma ; now that Kāma is no more what remains is only inanimate matter, "Truly", laments Rati, "women are hard", *kaṭhināḥ khalu striyāḥ* (4.5). We should notice the terseness of expression here. Kālidāsa does not say, for example, that the heart of a woman is hard, it does not break. The terse utterance—women are hard—connotes the identification of Rati with inert matter. This could remind us of the Sāṃkhya idea that when Puruṣa withdraws his consent to remain united with Prakṛti, the latter becomes ineffective, and evolution comes to a standstill.

In the following verse Rati clearly says that her life depends entirely on Kāma :[4]

kva nu māṃ tvad-adhīna-jīvitāṃ vinikīrya kṣana-bhinna-sauhṛdaḥ
nalinīṃ kṣata-setu-bandhano jala-saṃghāta ivāsi vidrutaḥ (4.6)

The bond of love broken in an instant, oh, where have you
fled casting me away, me, the life of whom depends on you,-
it is like the surging water that flees casting the lotus
away when the dam is broken.

What the denotative language cannot convey a methaphor brings home vividly. The lotus is to be taken as the expression of the essence that is water and its life depends on water as Rati's depends on Kāma. The lotus is the tangible and sensible form of the unmodified essence. But when the water flows away the lotus can perhaps live on for a moment, but is finally destined to die. This metaphor, in a way, also answers our doubt as regards the persistence of the dynamic *prakṛti*-principle after the withdrawal of the *puruṣa*-principle.

Kālidāsa, as we shall see, was not an adherent of the absolute dualism of the Sāṃkhya, where the Puruṣa and the Prakṛti are both eternally independent principles. Therefore he makes Rati apologetic about continuing to exist after her husband's death :

Madanena vinā-kṛtā Ratiḥ kṣaṇa-mātraṃ kila jīviteti me
vacanīyam idaṃ vyavasthitaṃ ramaṇa tvām anuyāmi yady api (4.21)

O beloved, though I am about to follow you, yet this reproof is
already attached to me, "Bereaved of Kāma, she was nevertheless alive
for a moment."

The relation of the essential and the expressive principles is made quite evident in course of Rati's lamentations; the idea of Kāma as the soul, Puruṣa, and Rati, as the nature, Prakṛti, is given expression in Rati's words to Vasanta:

gata eva na te nivartate sa sakhā dīpa ivānilāhataḥ
aham asya daśeva paśya mām aviṣahya-vyasanena dhūmitām (4.30)

Your friend is gone like a flame blown out by the wind;
and look at me, I am still here like the wick exhaling the smoke of unbearable suffering.

Kāma is the light, *dīpa*, without which the wick, *daśā*, has no reason of existence; it can however continue to smoke in a state of darkness and inertia. This further shows the ever-luminous aspect of the essence; without that essence manifestation is a thing of ignorance enveloped in dark smoke. On the other hand it also shows that for the light to manifest the wick is indispensible. Without the male-principle the female-principle cannot exist, or exists only in a dark phenomenal illusory existence; and without the latter the former remains unmanifest. The male is also the stable, the fixed, the unmoving; it is like a big supporting tree, *saṃśraya-druma*, whereas the female is a flux moving on the background of that immobile principle, like a creeper, *vallarī*, which grows clinging to the tree (4.31). The relation is further emphasized when Rati says:

śaśinā saha yāti kaumudī saha meghena taḍit pralīyate (4.33)
The moonlight departs with the moon; the lighting vanishes with the cloud.

When we remember that in Sanskrit *śaśin* and *megha* are masculine, and *kaumudī* and *taḍit* feminine, the line becomes pregnant with meaning. The similar use of the grammatical gender marks also the metaphors cited above: *jala-saṃghāta*, "torrent of water"—*nalinī*, "lotus" (4.6); *dīpa*, "light"—*daśā*, "wick" (4.30); *druma*, "tree"—*vallarī*, "creeper" (4.31). On the poetical-mythological level these pairs only intensify the relation of husband and wife; but on the philosophical-symbolical level they emphasize the duality of Puruṣa–Prakṛti, ersence and manifestation.[5]

If we pursue our search in the line we have taken we should now conclude that Rati should finally disappear. But she does not. She lives on. Can the two principles then remain divided and separate? Rationally, unless we take the classical Sāṃkhya standpoint this would be impossible. In fact Kālidāsa seems to givc, apparently, a non-rational miraculous solution.

We are told that when Rati prepares to abandon her life, a supernatural voice dissuades her and brings her the promise of Kāma's new-birth. Poetically this would be a weakness if we see it only in its surface-meaning. All the pathos in support of which Kālidāsa has waxed eloquent would seem to be a vain show; and we would be justified in charging the poet of trying to escape the philosophical consequence of the whole situation by taking cover behind a miraculous stunt. But it is not so. This only shows that the death of Kāma is just a withdrawal. The essence that Kāma represents is indestructible; it is only his incarnate form which is destroyed; i.e. the separation of Puruṣa from Nature.

The promise of Kāma's new-birth is a philosophical truth, for Puruṣa may withdraw but is reunited again with Prakṛti. Here we should notice that Puruṣa, the male principle, is not the highest; there is Puruṣottama, the Supreme Puruṣa, who is in this case Śiva. Śiva is therefore the master of creation, destruction and new-creation. The *prakṛti*-principle will then continue in a condition of inertia, of physicality,—exemplified here by Rati's body, *vapus*. The rebirth of Kāma and the union of the male and the female principles are again metaphorically evoked by the poet. The heavenly voice says :

> tad idam parirakṣa śobhane bhavitavya-priya-saṃgamaṃ vapuḥ
> ravi-pīta-jalā tapātyaye punar oghena hi yujyate nadī (4.44)
>
> Therefore, O lovely girl, keep alive this body which is destined to be united with its beloved: the river the water of which is drunk up by the sun at the end of summer (i.e. when the rains come) to the flowing water.

The metaphor is very significant; the water that evaporates in the summer and leaves the river dry, shows the dissociation of Puruṣa and Prakṛti; Prakṛti remains a vacant form, without possibility of evolution. But in a a new cycle of manifestation the water unites with the river and there takes birth a new creative flux imaged as a flowing stream, *ogha*.

In the case of *kāma*, the double notion of Puruṣa-Prakṛti is elaborately depicted. Though in the case of *artha* and *dharma* it is not so elaborate yet we have indications enough to convince ourselves of the fact that there too the double aspect exists.

(ii) *HIMĀLAYA-MENĀ*

We shall now study the relation between Himālaya and Menā. There could be no doubt that Kāma and Rati concretize the principle of desire.

But that Himālaya and Menā concretize the principle of *artha* is not so evident. We have therefore first to study those indications which will support our contention.

Artha signifies the means through which *kāma* and *dharma* may be realized. In its most concrete denotation the word signifies wealth or material prosperity; for without material prosperity neither enjoyment is possible nor the right and successful performance of moral and religious duties. But *artha* should be supported and sanctified by *dharma*.

Kālidāsa has quite explicitly spoken about the riches that Himālaya possesses. And especially riches and materials which are needed for *yajña*, sacrifice, the highest expression of the Vedic *dharma*. He is called *yajñāṅga-yoni* (1.17), "source of objects needed in sacrifice". And Menā is described as he *ātmānurūpā* (1.18), "similar to himself", which shows that she has the same qualities as Himālaya, or that she is the female form, *rūpa*, of Himālaya.

Himālaya is a very complex figure.[6] We cannot say that he represents only *artha*; what we are trying to say is that Himālaya, in connection with Menā, has the implications of the *puruṣa*-aspect, the essence of *artha*. Therefore we have to consider here mainly Menā, and Himālaya only in close relation to her.

Of the four women in KS Menā is the least elaborately pictured. She is mentioned mostly in vague general terms. However there exist some indications which will help us to find the philosophical implication behind her figuration. We have to remember that Menā, like in fact all the other characters, is a living being, though sketchily drawn, and not just an allegorical representation. She, like the others, bears the strains of an idea: when we compare her with the other characters she seems to represent the *prakṛti*-aspect of *artha*. This is shown by her effort to dissuade Pārvatī from practising austerities. She lays the strongest stress on the principle of material comfort;—a comfort that comes from riches and prosperity. When she says:

tapaḥ kva vatse kva ca tāvakaṃ vapuḥ
padaṃ saheta bhramarasya pelavaṃ śirīṣa-puṣpaṃ na punaḥ patatriṇaḥ (5.4)

. . . this *tapas* is so unlike (the delicacy of) your body. The delicate *śirīṣa*-flower can bear the tread of a bee but not that of a bird,

we see only her anxiety for the lack of her daughter's physical comfort. She seems to say by the use of *kva* . . . *kva* that *tapas* is hard and painful;

how can she who is delicate and nurtured in the pleasures that wealth can give, bear to live the life of austerities and renunciation !

And when we read further about Pārvatī's austere practices, we notice that the first things she rejects are all those things that wealth can give. She takes off her necklace, *hāra* (5.8), her girdle, *rasanā* (5.10) ; she who was accustomed to sleep on gorgeous beds, *mahārhya-śayyā* (5.12) now lies on the bare earth. This renunciation is what Menā found hard to accept. The very few times that Menā is brought before us, we find that the idea of *artha* is what preoccupies her most.

In the case of Kāma and Rati, it was through their separation that the poet showed the complenentarity of the male and the female. Here it is through the perfect harmony between the husband and wife. The Sāṃkhya relation of Puruṣa-Prakṛti is strongly suggested in the following verses :

> Śailaḥ saṃpūrṇa-kāmo 'pi Menā-mukham udaikṣata
> prāyeṇa gṛhiṇī-netrāḥ kanyārtneṣu kuṭumbinaḥ
> mene Menāpi tat sarvaṃ patyuḥ kāryam abhīpsitam
> bhavanty avyabhicāriṇyo bhartur iṣṭe pati-vratāḥ (6.85-86)

> Although what he wished for was fully realized, yet he looked at Menā's face inquiringly : mostly, in matters regarding daughters the wife is the eyes of a married man. And Menā thought that what her husband did, was what she herself desired. Devoted wives are faithful to their husbands' wishes.

Several expressions of this passage are intensely suggestive of the Sāṃkhya vision. (a) Puruṣa is perfect in himself : Himālaya is *saṃpūrṇa-kāma*, "he whose desire is fulfilled". (b) But Puruṣa is not alone ; there is also Prakṛti in whom he is reflected : Himālaya looks at Menā's face. What does this reflection mean? Kālidāsa says aphoristically that mostly the wife is the eyes of the husband in matters which concern daughters. Why only daughters and not sons too? For the daughter, like the wife, is the Prakṛti ; she is the manifestation. (c) Puruṣa enjoys through Prakṛti ; therefore the manifestation, here symbolized by the daughter, has also to be enjoyed and known through Prakṛti. Kālidāsa expressess this idea by means of one concentrated adjective : *gṛhinī-netra*, "one whose eyes are the wife".

On the other hand, Prakṛti has really no choice of her own; she is not the giver of consent, she accepts to be Puruṣa's instrument, for his fulfilment. Menā too, as a devoted wife, accepts the husband's wishes.

(iii) *VASIṢṬHA-ARUNDHATĪ*

We now come to the concept of *dharma* whose importance in Kālidāsian world-scheme is without doubt greater than that of *artha* but lesser than that of *kāma*[7] and *mokṣa*. Here too we see the interplay of the male and the female principles, of essential truth-knowledge and its manifestation. Kālidāsa has, for this purpose, introduced the *saptarṣi*, the seven sages, and Arundhatī. Mythologically, Arundhatī is the wife of Vasiṣṭha, one of the seven sages. But Kālidāsa takes the whole group as a unit; only once does he introduce one sage, Aṅgiras, by name, as the spokesman. We can therefore take the dual principle to be represented by Saptarṣi–Arundhatī. One may ask why did the poet not then introduce also the seven wives; the reason is that the other wives do not reach the highest standard of *dharma*; Arundhatī is the only perfect wife, the highest example of conjugal faithfulness.[8]

These *ṛṣi* are in fact above *ācāra*, which is the foundation of *dharma*.[9] They are liberated; they are the creators of the universe. They are *tapodhanāḥ* (6.4), "those whose treasure is *tapas*". But they show to the world the right path of *dharma* by practising that *dharma* themselves. From the point of view of men they are then representatives of *dharma*; though Kālidāsa, on several occasions, has spoken of their *tapas*, it is on the aspect of right living for the worldly man that he lays the greatest emphasis. Likewise Arundhatī is said to be the embodiment of the fulfilment of *tapas*, *sākṣād iva tapaḥ-siddhi* (6.11). But in her case too, we have to see her rather as the example of *dharma* incarnate in life; she is *dharma* dynamized. This is clear enough when we read:

> tad-darśanād abhuc Chambhor bhūyān dārārtham ādaraḥ
> kriyāṇāṃ khalu dharmyāṇāṃ sat-patnyo mūla-kāraṇam (6.13)
>
> Seeing her (Arundhatī) Śiva's desire for a wife became stronger: good wives, it is true, are the first cause (*mūla-kāraṇa*) of religious duty (*dharmyā kriyā*).

The second line states without ambiguity the dharmic nature of Arundhatī. The words *kriyāṇām…dharmyāṇām* reveal the subtle philosophical distinction between the essential *dharma*, and its working, its dynamism, *kriyā*. And the example of Arundhatī incites Śiva to the performing of *dharma*. Notice that although the seven great sages are before Śiva with all their luminosity, in all their high glory, yet it is not they who move Śiva, for they are the *puruṣa*–aspect.

Note also the implication of the word *mūla-kāraṇam*, which is attached to Arundhatī; the root-cause are chaste women like Arundhatī. This word refers to the Sāṃkhya terminology. *Mula-prakṛti* is the primal cause; of her there is no cause[10].

There is little doubt that the whole episode relating to the seven sages and Arundhatī is the expression of *dharma*. It is by the instigation of *dharma* that Śiva moves towards Pārvatī :

dharmeṅāpi padaṃ Śarve kārite Pārvatīṃ prati... (6.14)

And when (considerations of) *dharma* induced Śiva to take the (first) step towards (his marriage with) Pārvatī. . .

These are helpful indications which suggest to our seeking mind the philosophical implicatiens of some concepts. We are till now satisfied that the three pairs depict, on the basis of the *trīvarga*, the Sāṃkhya concept of Puruṣa and Prakṛti. But all these are only lower partial manifestations; they belong to the worldly hemisphere of our existence, and are but half-expressions of the highest principle of liberation, *mokṣa*. Is there too this double principle? We shall now take up the fourth couple in KS.

(iv) *Śiva-Pārvatī*

Śiva is *mokṣa* personified; the highest liberation for a Śiva-worshipper can be nothing but the union with his Supreme God. As in the three previous concepts *mokṣa* may be said to have also two aspects, male and female. Before we enter into the study of these aspects, as represented by Śiva and Pārvatī, we should attempt to define the meaning of *mokṣa* in the context of the Kālidāsian world-view.

The philosophy of Kālidāsa is the philosophy of a poet which escapes all systematization. And it will be labour lost to try to discover any such system. However there are several influences which have taken shape in his poem. Critics have spoken of Sāṃkhya which has, from a very ancient time, close connection with Śaivism, ". . . on serait tentér de penser que les doctrines Sāṃkhya s'harmonisent davantage avec les croyances śivaites", writes Esnoul in the introduction to her translation of the Sāṃkhya-Kārikā.[11] But the Sāṃkhya concepts have undergone drastic changes in the Śiva context. If we speak at all of Sāṃkhya in respect to Kālidāsa we have to look for it in the Gītā, along with the Vedāntic concepts which have finally modified and transmuted Gītā's Sāṃkhya–Yoga concepts, and which are as it has been shown by many scholars, pre-classical and different in many respects from the doctrine as pronounded by Īśvarakṛṣṇa.[12]

It is evident that Kālidāsa was familiar with teachings of the Upaniṣad and the Gītā. Not only the many passages that scholars have pointed out in Kālidāsa's works which are parallel with ideas and expressions in the Upaniṣad and the Gītā, but as K. S. Ramaswami Sastri says, "Even more than these and other passages the spirit of the Gītā shines out in his poems".[13]

It is indeed the spirit of the Gītā that has coloured, so to say, the whole world-vision of Kālidāsa. At the time of Kālidāsa there is no Śaiva work comparable to the Gītā's synthetic world-view. And though the Gītā is considered by some to be a sectarian Vaiṣṇava work, yet it has a very universal and non-sectarian appeal which has influenced almost all the later religious and philosophical doctrines.

Also, if we put Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad and the Gītā side by side we can find elements which show that the Śaivism of this Upaniṣad and the Vaiṣṇavism of the Gītā were not altogether independent of one another.

> saṃyuktam etat kṣaraṃ ca
> vyāktāvyaktaṃ bharate viśvam īśaḥ (Śv.U. I.8)

> The Lord upholds all this which is made by joining together the changing and the unchanging, the manifest and the unmanifest.

Such verses show the close agreement between the idea of the Supreme Lord in this Upaniṣad and in the Gītā. The Gītā speaks very clearly of the triple Puruṣa, the *kṣara*, the *akṣara* and the *uttama*[14]. In this Upaniṣad too we see that there is the *kṣara*, the *akṣara*, and above them, supporting them, there is the Lord, Iśa. When we turn back to Kālidāsa, we find that his *Śiva*, in his highest expression, is the One Lord, *eka iśa*. Pārvatī says, addressing the *brahmacārin*, about Śiva :

> vivakṣatā doṣam api cyutātmanā tvayaikam īśaṃ prati sādhu bhāṣitam
> (5.81)

> In spite of your wishing to find fault with him, you, whose soul is debased, have spoken well of the One Lord.

The *ekam iśam* echoes *deva ekaḥ* (Śv. U.I.10) and is the same as the Gītā's *para-puruṣa*.

Let us now consider the *puruṣa-prakṛti* concept. We notice that *prakṛti* is an eternal part of the Supreme. The Gītā speaks of two *prakṛti*, the *aparā* and the *parā*. When one knows God truly, *tattvataḥ* (VII.3)[15] one sees that the *prakṛti* are nothing but becomings of God,

Firstly, *aparā prakṛti*, the phenomenal nature ;

bhūmir āpo 'nalo vāyuḥ khaṃ mano buddhir eva ca
ahaṃkāra itīyaṃ me bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭa-dhā (Gītā.VII.4)

Earth, water, fire, air, sky, mind, intellect and ego : such is my *prakṛti* in an eightfold division.

This is the description of the material or phenomenal body of God. A similar idea can be seen in Kālidāsa. He uses several times the word *aṭṣa-mūrti*, one of Śiva's many significant epithets. That this concept of *aṣṭa-mūrti* was of special importance[16] to Kālidāsa is seen in the opening invocations of two of his plays, *Mālavikāgnimitra* and *Abhijñānaśakuntala*. In the earlier play Kālidāsa speaks of the eight bodies, *aṣṭābhir . . . tanubhir* ; and in the later he elaborates the whole concept :

yā sṛṣṭiḥ sraṣṭur ādyā vahati vidhi-hutaṃ yā havir yā ca hotrī
ye dva kālaṃ vidhattaḥ śruti-viṣaya-guṇā yā sthitā vyāpya viśvam
yām āhuḥ sarva-bīja-prakṛtir iti yayā prāṇinaḥ prāṇavantaḥ
pratyakṣābhiḥ prapannas tanubhir avatu vas tābhir aṣṭābhir īśaḥ

May the Lord protect us,—the Lord who possesses eight distinct forms : (1) (water) the Creator's first creation, (2) (fire) which carries oblations duly offered, (3) the offerer, (4) (the sun) and (5) (the moon) the two which regulate (the flow of) time, (6) (sky) which pervades all and has the power to transmit sound, (7) (earth) which is called the womb of seeds, (8) (air) by which creatures live.

When we compare the Gītā's *prakṛtir aṣṭadhā* with this, we see some difference : the five material elements are the same, but then we have on the one side *manas, buddhi, ahaṃkara* ; on the other, *ye dve kālaṃ vidhattaḥ* "the two which *regulate* time", and *hotri*. The regulators of time are explained as the sun and the moon. Indeed the eight forms of Śiva are traditionally given as : *bhūtārka-candra-yajvāno mūrtayo 'ṣṭau prakīrtitāḥ*[17], "the five material elements the sun, the moon and the sacrificer are known as the eight forms".

Even in KS, *aṣṭa-mūrti* is mentioned several times[18] but in one verse a special emphasis is laid on this concept :

tatrāgnim ādhāya samit-samiddhaṃ svam eva mūrty-antaram aṣṭa-mūrti
svayaṃ vidhātā tapasaḥ phalānāṃ kenāpi kāmena tapaś cacāra (1.57)

(Śiva) who has eight forms, set up a fire which he kindled with ritual-wood,—this was another manifestation of himself–; and he, who

himself bestows the fruits of *tapas*, practised *tapas* with some purpose or other.

Of all the eight forms only *fire* is given here a special status. We can easily understand the cause of this when we see the role of fire in the poem[19].

We cannot definitely say whether there is any direct relation between the concept of *prakṛtir aṣṭadhā* and the *aṣṭa-mūrti*. However, we see that the *aṣṭa-mūrti* is a manifestation of Śiva in space and time.

Next, we come to the concept of *parā prakṛti* :

apareyam itas tu anyāṃ prakṛtiṃ viddhi me parām
jīva-bhūtām mahā-bāho yayedaṃ dhāryate jagat (Gītā.VII.5)

This is the lower (*apāra*) ; but know my higher (*parā*) *prakṛti* which is other than this; the latter, O mighty-armed, has become the soul incarnate (*jīva*) and upholds the moving world.

It does not take much effort of imagination to see that Pārvatī is the personification of this *parā prakṛti jiva-bhūtā*. The association of *prakṛti* with a Mother Goddess is highly probable. Here we may hear what Anne-Marie Esnoul has to say about the relation of Puruṣa with Virāj in the Vedic literature, and Puruṣa with Prakṛti in Sāṃkhya.[20]

"Il est possible enfin que demeure dans la compréhension de la Nature évolutive—désignée par le substantif féminin *prakṛti* et sentie comme faisant couple ave *puruṣa*, le mâle inopérant, en même temps qu'un écho de la *virāj* védique, quelque trace d'une sorte de monisme de la Nature. (. . .) Ce monisme de la Nature que, il faut bien le dire, on n'explicite jamais, se rattache-t-il à quelque culte ancien de la Grande Déesse, Mère ,Universelle? Aucun texte ne l'établit, mais la manière dont as comporte le principe féminin du Sāṃkhya y fait songer".[21]

Whatever be the historical inter-relationship among these concepts the Indian mind has long ago made the association of Prakṛti and Puruṣa with Śiva, and Śakti.

What now interests us mainly is the pair *parā prakṛti* and *para-puruṣa* which are personified in the couple Pārvatī-Śiva; for *para prakṛti* is God become *jiva*, and *mokṣa*, which is the subject of our investigation in this section, is the union of *jiva* with the Supreme. *Puruṣottama* or *parā-puruṣa*, the Supreme Lord above the dualities, and *parā prakṛti* are both eternal :

prakṛtiṃ puruṣaṃ caiva viddhy anādi ubhāv api (Gītā XIII.20)

Know both *prakṛti* and *puruṣ* to be eternal.

But the Gītā does not admit of their being eternally separate, for they are two aspects of the Supreme Lord.

In the expression of the Gītā, Puruṣottama embodied as Kṛṣṇa is personalized and he becomes, byond all philosophical ideas, a concrete person, and is also poetically valid. Therefore when Kṛṣṇa says :

man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī māṃ namas-kuru
mām evaiṣyasi satyaṃ te pratijāne priyo'si me (Gītā.XVIII.65)

Fix your mind on me, love me, to me offer your sacrifices and make obeissance : you will surely come to me,—in truth I promise you this—, for you are dear to me,

we feel that he is very near to us and is not just a metaphysical concept. However the concept of Prakṛti has no such concretization in the Gītā. Therefore in the highest realisation of the Puruṣottama Prakṛti loses her separate identity.

In KS *parā prakṛti* is personalized; Pārvatī is as concrete as Śiva. Because of this the poetic interplay between Śiva–Pārvatī is intense; it is not just the synthesis or union of two abstract concepts, but rather a dramatic encounter and a union both physically symbolic and spiritually real.

Kālidāsa as a poet did not bother to evolve a new philosophy. His power lies not in revealing new truths or facets of truth, but in accepting the truths already existing, entering into their living fountainhead through the power of poetic intuition and vision, *pratibhā*, and new-creating the truth in poetic figures and dramatic situations.

Because of this power of incarnating truth we get, at the highest level of spiritual experience, Puruṣottama, with whom Prakṛti is completely identified. He is the Supreme Lord who holds both the aspects male and female, in a single form—*ardha-nārīśvara*.

Even in the very first Book of KS we are given to understand this eternal relation of Śiva and Pārvatī. When Pārvatī grows up, Nārada, the divine sage, sees her and predicts the future :

taṃ Nāradaḥ kāma-caraḥ kadācit kanyāṃ prekṣya pituḥ samīpe
samādideśaika-vadhūṃ bhavitrīṃ premṇā śarīrārdh-harāṃ Harasya
(1.50)

Once Nārada, who wandered about as he pleased, saw the girl beside her father; he foretold that she would become Śiva's only wife and, through love, take possession of half of his body.

And then later we find the fulfilment of this forecast. After her marriage when she bowed down to virtuous ladies they blessed her and wished that she might enjoy the unbroken love of her husband. The poet adds that she not only had that lcve, but far more; she shared half of her husband's body :

akhaṇḍitaṃ prema labhasva patyur ity ucyate tābhir Umā sma namrā
tayā tu tasyārdha-śarīra-bhājā paścāt-kṛtāḥ snigdha-janāśiṣo 'pi
(7.28)

They told Pārvatī who had bowed before them, "May you receive the uninterrupted love of your husband!" And she, who shared (later) half of his body exceeded the blessings of these well-wishers.

Here we should not miss the suggestion that the union is really *advaitic.* The blessings show there is still separation although it speaks of the high realisation of God in love, *preman.* Nevertheless the union is not total. But the poet intervenes to forecast the complete union of Puruṣa and Prakṛti.

Yet the concept of *ardha-nārīśvara* is too far from our human perception. With this religious-mythical figure Kālidāsa has revealed the real meaning of the union, and has shown the goal; but poetically this final status has very little appeal. The poetic appeal lies in the whole adventure towards that union; and it is this that Kālidāsa endeavours to depict through the marriage scenes and the erotic descriptions of Book 8.

In this context of the union between the Supreme Puruṣa and the Supreme Prakṛti we should also investigate the suggestiveness of the other name of Pārvatī, i. e. Umā. She is the daughter of the Mountain. This suggests to the reader the Upaniṣadic figure of Umā Haimavatī, "Umā, the daughter of Himavat". But it is impossible to say whether already at that early period Umā was given the mythical-Purāṇic status of the daughter of the Mountain Himālaya. It only proves that Umā was associated with the snow-covered mountain. However in the Purāṇic times when Umā became the daughter of Himālaya, people did not forget the Upaniṣadic Umā Haimavatī. This association makes it clear that she is the dynamic knowledge of the Brahman, *brahma-vidyā*, who is superior to the gods. And the allegory of the Kena Upaniṣad makes it clear that Umā is the power of the Brahman who appeared as the *yakṣa.* When Indra approached the *yakṣa* he

saw the spirit disappear and at the very place appeared Umā-*tasminn eva ākāśe* (III. 12), in that very sky. This expression suggests that Umā is nothing but the same *yakṣa* in his female manifestation; she is the Supreme Prakṛti.

There is no doubt whatsoever that Śiva is the Supreme Lord, *Puruṣottama*, and not just the Īśvara of the Sāṃkhya-Yoga : "... we cannot hold," says Keith, "that the godhead envisaged by Kālidāsa is the pale Īśvara of the Yoga ; in Brahman we are told are united both matter and spirit as they are known in the Sāṃkhya, and this we may fairly take as indicating that (...) over the spirits and matter stood the absolute, who to Kālidāsa takes specially the form of Śiva but who is also Brahman and Viṣṇu, the Spirit that perishes not beyond the darkness."[22]

In KS Śiva is given a very special place. Philosophically we may say that Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are the same; but poetically Śiva has to be unique, because he is not only the Supreme but also the hero of the poem, near to the human, who is human for all poetic purpose.[23] This uniqueness and superiority of Śiva is made explicit on various occassions, as in the following verse :

vadhur vidhātrā pratinandyate ama kalyāṇi vīra-prasavā bhaveti
vācaspatiḥ sann api so 'ṣṭa-mūrtau tv āśāsya-cintā-stimito babhuva.
(7.87)

Brahmā blessed the bride, "O fortunate girl, may you be the mother of heroic sons !" Then when it came to blessing Śiva, even though he was the Lord of Speech, he became slow-witted.

Kālidāsa also suggests that Pārvatī is similar to Śiva. We have already noted that, according to the Gītā, the *parā prakṛti* is identified with *Puruṣottama* (VII, 6) ; in the same way Kālidāsa suggests the identity of Śiva and Pārvatī :

tam yathātma-sadṛśaṃ varaṃ vadhūr anvarajyata varas tathaiva tām
sāgarād anapagā hi Jāhnavī so 'pi tan-mukha-rasaika-nirvṛtiḥ
(8. 16)

As the bride was enamoured of the bridegroom who was like herself, so also was the bridegroom enamoured of her : the Ganges never moves away from the Sea and the Sea too remains happy with the honey of her mouth alone.

This verse is very suggestive of the dual aspect of Puruṣa-Prakṛti, the two who are eternally one. The word *ātma-sadṛśa* suggests their eternal

identity. But even more revealing is the image of the Ganges and the Sea, Sāgara. In essence the river and the sea are the same; it is the same water that constitutes them, yet their is a difference. The sea, Sāgara, the male, is the essential principle, static, for ever existent; and the river which is also water is characterized by its flow; it is flowing, dynamic water. This shows that the river is nothing but the "becoming" of the sea. This suggests further that, in the principle of *mokṣa*, Pārvatī is the dynamic aspect, the energy which leads to the goal.

This verse also evokes the notion of *mokṣa*, as envisaged by Kālidāsa. Let us try to grasp the suggestion of the expression *tan-mukha-rasaika-nirvṛtiḥ*. Here *nirvṛti* means joy or satisfaction, and *rasa* which is 'water' is also the *adhara-sudhā*, the nectar of the lips. Such is the meaning in accordance with the best erotic descriptions. Sāgara, who is here the *nāgaraka* takes great delight in kissing Jāhnavī. But *nirvṛti* means also *liberation*. And although we may not translate the expression we are scrutinizing as, "he whose liberation is the *rasa*, delight, of her face" when applied to the sea, yet I believe, the poet tries to convey deftly the idea of *mokṣa, nirvṛti*, which is the joyous union of the Bride and the Eternal Bridegroom.

We may now say a few words about the Gītā's idea of *mokṣa* which, we may hold without any hesitation, is one of the main spiritual and philosophical sources of our poet.

When Arjuna asks Kṛṣṇa which of the two kinds of union is better, union with the unmanifest Immutable, *akṣara, avyaya*, or union with Kṛṣṇa who has revealed himself as the Supreme Puruṣa, Kṛṣṇa replies emphatically:

mayy āveśya mano ye māṃ nitya-yuktā upāsate
śraddhayā parayopetās te me yuktatamā matāḥ

(XII. 2)

Those who, possessed of the highest faith, having fixed their mind in me, united constantly with me, adore me, them I hold to be the most perfect *yogin*.

This decisive reply shows that *moksa* is not a dissolution in the immutable Brahman but that the highest state of spiritual realization is the dwelling in Him; and by this union the liberated soul is made one with the divine nature, *sādharmya*, Kṛṣṇa says:

...mama sādharmyam āgatāḥ
sarge 'pi nopajāyante pralaye na vyathanti ca

(XIV. 2)

...those who have become of like nature with me do neither take birth at the time of creation nor suffer at the time of dissolution.

In this verse Kṛṣṇa is speaking of the liberated being who is beyond birth and death, beyond creation and destruction. "That liberation, that oneness, that putting on of the divine nature, *sādharmya*, it (the Gītā) declares to be the very essence of spiritual freedom and the whole significance of immortality. This supreme importance assigned to *sādharmya* is a capital point in the teaching of the Gītā."[24]

Kālidāsa echoes this idea of *sādharmya* in his conception of *ardhanārīśvara*, and in the expression *ātma-sadṛśa* (8.16) which we have already mentioned earlier.

That *mokṣa* is the union with Śiva, the Supreme God, is made clear by Kālidāsa. Pārvatī's *tapas* cannot be for the attainment of Heaven, says Śiva in the guise of the *brahmacārin* (5.45); Pārvatī does not care for the lower gods like Indra and others (5.53), she only wants Siva.

When we consider the couple Śiva-Pārvatī, we see that they represent the opposite pole of Kāma-Rati, although there are outwardly many similarities. Both the pairs concretize love and union in love; but, whereas the latter represent, as we have shown, the physical form of desire, the former concretize love which is the highest liberation : *kāma* is transmuted by *tapas* into *preman*.

We may now conclude this chapter by noting that the concept, so dear to Kālidāsa, of the four aims of life, have found concrete formulation in the four pairs. Poetic language is often characterized by its paradoxical nature : it reveals while hiding, and hides while pretending to reveal. But this is a challenge to the reader who has constantly to ask questions about the validity of his own reading, who has to grope in the dark forest of symbols, and yet remain lucid enough to be able to distinguish between what is a plausible interpretation and what is only a play of his own fancy. But often, fortunately for the critically sensitive reader, the poet himself gives hints which enable him to follow the right path of judgment and understanding. Though we have tried to show that the four different pairs signify the four different aims, yet the distinction should not be made too rigidly. There is always an interpenetration. Each one of the pairs has also characteristics of the others. And this is as it should be in poetry; because all these characters are living and not just allegorical names for a certain abstract idea. This is especially so in the case of the pairs Kāma-Rati, and Śiva-Pārvatī. The ideas have never become a burden, and therefore are not to be found on the surface,

We have to use sometimes only a word, a hint, an image in order to grasp them.

As regards Śiva and Pārvatī, who are the main characters of the poem, we find that they carry many other suggestions. In the next chapter we shall show that they represent other bipartite concepts dear to the Indian mind.

REFERENCES

1. *Rati,* which signifies pleasure, enjoyment, and in a more specialized sense, sexual pleasure is personified as one of the wives of Kāma, the other being *Prīti,* affection.
2. *tatra śṛṅgāro nāma rata-sthāyi-bhāva-prabhavaḥ,* NŚ, p. 300; See also SD. III. 175-6.
3. Note also the word *pralaya* (4.2) "cessation of effort".
4. Every Hindu woman of ancient India could say such a thing; and the idea is is releated to the practice of *satī*, the reference to which is also made in the poem (4.34-36). But I think that we should not overlook, in this context, the cosmological symbolism of the dual aspect of male and female. Kālidāsa who was very much aware of this symbolim has not, I believe, made Rati say these words only to evoke cheap sentimentality. It emphasizes the interdependence of the two principles.
5. At first the two metaphors (4.30) may seem to be somewhat similar in nature. But I think that the corresponding elements fulfil different functions. In one case the moon is male and its light female; in the other the light is male and the wick female. On comparing the two images one would expect the moon and the wick to have the same function. But if we probe into the metaphors we shall see that Kālidāsa was right. We should first of all avoid the scientific truth that moonlight is only a reflected light, and see it as an emantion of the moon which is a luminous body, the rays being its outgoing expressions. But in the case of the light and the wick, Kālidāsa certainly noticed that the light did not emanate from the wick; the wick when not lighted is lightless. Light and not the wick, is here the fiirst meaningful element, the wick is the body which the light animates and energizes, and through which it expresses itself.
6. We have already seen his double aspect of *Hiraṇya-garbha* and *Virāj*.
7. I do not intend to say that Kālidāsa considers *kāma* to be a higher principle than *dharma*. What I mean is that the poetic tension of the Kālidāsian world is founded on the interaction of *kāma* and *mokṣa*, and in that scheme *artha* and *dharma* are supporting principles only, without the highly charged emotional and psychological symbolism of the former two.
8. MBh. XIII. 124.
9. *ācāraś ca satāṃ dharmaḥ santaś cācāra-lakṣaṇāḥ* (MBh. III. 198. 70) *ācāra-prabhavo dharmaḥ* (MBH. XIII. 107. 147; 135. 137).
10. *Mūla-prakṛti* is not produced, *mūla prakṛtir avikṛtiḥ,* says the *Sāṃkhya-kārikā* III.

11. Anne-Marie Esnoul, *Les strophes de Saṃkhya*, p. XXVII. "le fait que le Sāṃkhya—uni au Yoga qui est pourtant, lui, volontiers śivaïte—serve de fonds à la Bhagavad Gītā, texte universellement connu et révéré dans l'Inde, nous trompe et nous incite à rapprocher Sāṃkhya et Viṣṇouisme". *ibid*, pp. XXVII—VIII.
12. G. J. Larson, *Classical Sāṃkhya*, pp. 114ff.
13. K. S. Ramaswami Sāstri, *Kalidasa : His period, personality and poetry*, Vol. I, p. 25. The author quotes many parallel passages on the one hand from the Gītā, the Upaniṣad, the Vedānta Sūtra, on the other from the works of Kālidāsa, to show that the poet was conversant with these ancient texts. See also Giuseppe Tucci, *op. cit*.
14. Sri Aurobindo, *Essays on the Gītā*, pp. 421ff.
15. We find this word (*tattvataḥ*) echoed by Kālidāsa who makes Pārvatī say that the knowledge of Śiva must be attained *paramārthataḥ* (5.75). Notice also the word *yāthārthya-vid* (5.77).
16. V. Raghavan says, "All over his works, Kālidāsa is fascinated with the idea of Śiva as being in eight forms, *Aṣṭamūrti*,—the five elements of Nature, the two luminaries, Sun and Moon, symbolising Time, and the individual Self (i. e. the aspirant man) who seeks God through *Dharmic* acts". "Sanskrit Poetry and Indian Thought," p. 476.
17. Quoted by Mallinātha, comm. of KS. 1. 57.
18. 1.57; 7.76, 87 etc.
19. Fire has a strong semiotic value in KS; one of its most, potent expression is the fire of Śiva's third eye lurning the god of love.
20. We should also remember here what has been said earlier about Virāj.
21. A.-M. Esnoul, *op. cit*. p. XIV.
22. A. B. Keith,, *op. cit*. p. 100.
23. Śiva was already, before Kālidāsa's poem, a mythical hero. We may here note what Susanne Langer says about the mythical hero, "His sphere of activity is the real world, because what he symbolises belongs to the real world, no matter how fantastic its expression may be..." *op. cit*., p. 153. Kālidāsa has made him more real and more human and personal than he was in the myths.
24. Sri Aurobindo, *Essays on the Gītā*. p. 407.

CHAPTER VI

THE THREE CATEGORIES : GOD, MAN AND NATURE

In the last chapter we have spoken of the supreme Person and the supreme Nature. But there is also the universal nature and the Spirit pervading that nature. God is not only within but also without; He inhabits all that is, *sarvam āvṛtya tiṣṭhati* (Gītā, XIII. 14); He is that which is within all creatures and outside all creatures; He is the moving and the unmoving, *bahir antaś ca bhūtānām acaraṃ caram eva ca* (Gītā, XIII. 16).

God is all, in the unitary vision; but in manifestation He is at first Puruṣa and Prakṛti, he is Śiva and Pārvatī; he is Spirit and Nature; though he is indivisible he seems to divide himself in creation :

avibhaktaṃ ca bhūteṣu vibhaktam iva ca sthitam (Gītā, XIII. 17)

What the poet has revealed and what we ourselves are trying to grasp is the relation between the undivided One and the multiple nature of many forms and names.

Kālidāsa is always enamoured of nature; he is a poet who never ceases to wonder at this stupendous display of God, display of his beauty and power. But this wonder was not limited to the outward form but went deeper into the very mystery of things : nature stretched on the one hand to the idea of the human on the other to that of the immanent spirit. He was a poet, not a yogin, but his deep and wide learning and his great sympathy for India's religious spiritual tradition, made his poetic vision akin to the yogic experience. All his learning, observation, sympathy and poetic vision finds expression in his works. "His was a richly stored mind," says Aurobindo, "the mind at once of a scholar and observer (...) widely and very minutely observant of the life of Nature, of bird and beast, season and tree and flower, all the lore of the mind and all the lore of the eye; and this mind was at the same time always that of a great poet and artist."[1]

Many critics have laid emphasis on the fact that outward nature, *bahiḥ-prakṛti*, is established in Kālidāsa's works in collaboration, *sahayogitā*, and in soul-indentity, *sātmyatā*, with human nature.[2] Raghavan says, for example ; "The love of Nature, the minute observation of things and the pen-picture of these standing by themseives would be enough to show the poet's powers. But all this is not abstract Nature or inert matter, not mere flora and fauna, insensate, brute or unrelated to man and woman and their moods and modes."[3]

But the relation is not just between the human world and physical nature, it is more complex and global. In KS we notice that Pārvatī is closely connected to the physical nature. This relation, when read on the human level, i. e. when we consider Pārvatī as an earthly woman, reveals the relation of man with nature. But Pārvatī is also the divine Prakṛti of whom the physical nature is the body. And within this complex, there is God, the Universal Spirit, Śiva. The universal Nature is the concretization, the materialization of Pārvatī who is the personification of Prakṛti.

We have already noticed a double aspect in our analysis of Himālaya as Hiraṇya-garbha and Virāj. In Pārvāti, the daughter of Himālaya too, we find a similar duality : the aspect of *parā prakṛti*, the spiritual aspect of nature on the one hand, and the physical nature on the other hand. We shall now try to describe this physical nature in its relation to Pārvatī, personalized Prakṛti, and Śiva, the Lord of Prakṛti.

At the very first mention of Pārvatī, Kālidāsa establishes quite unequivocally her close relationship with nature :

> prasanna-dik pāṃśu-vivikta-vātaṃ śaṃkha-svanānantara-puṣpa-vṛṣṭi
> śarīriṇaṃ sthāvara-jaṅgamānāṃ sukhāya taj-janma-dinaṃ babhūva
> (1.23)

> The sky was bright on all sides, the wind bore no dust, no sooner were the conches blown than fell a shower of flowers : this was the day on which she (Pārvāti) was born for the joy of all creatures moving and unmoving.

With her birth the whole nature becomes glad. This suggests her close intimacy with nature. When read keeping in mind the two preceding ones which say that she is born as the reincarnation of Satī, this verse seems to convey the idea that the embodied creatures and objects of the world had lost all joy ; now, with her birth these have got a new impulse of life, and nature greets this day with all her beauty. The horizon has become clear,

there is no more darkness, a new day is come; the wind too is now pure, there is no dust, conches are blown announcing the happy news, — ordinary noises of the common day have given place to the sacred sound of the conch, and finally the shower of flowers, adoration of nature by gods and supernatural beings.

However this is only the first inkling. She is a child but as she grows up all beautiful things find expression in her body. She is the work of the great Artist who Himself fashions her.

unmīlitaṃ tūlikayeva citraṃ sūryāṃśubhir bhinnam ivāravindam
babhūva tasyāś catur-asra-śobhi vapur vibhaktaṃ nava-yauvanena
(1.32)

As a picture grows under the painter's brush, as a lotus bursts open (touched) by sun's rays, so her body was disclosed as a thing of perfect beauty by the first flush of youth.

When we consider the two images together we get the suggestion that the luminous Puruṣa, the light beyond darkness, here concretized by *sūrya*, the sun, brings into manifestation all the beauty and grandeur of nature in the form of Pārvatī. She is the most perfect expression of nature, in her all beautiful things dwell harmoniously together, *catur-asra-śobhi*. In nature there are many lovely things but they are all separate and often conflicting. But in Pārvatī's body all contradictions are reconciled. Such is the purport of the following verse :

candraṃ gatā padma-guṇān na bhuṅkte padmāśritā cāndramasīm abhikhyām
Umā-mukhaṃ tu pratipadya lolā dvi-saṃśrayāṃ prītim avāpa Lakṣmīḥ
(1.43)

When she goes to the moon, inconstant Beauty (Lakṣmī) cannot enjoy the qualities of the lotus, when she makes the lotus her seat she cannot enjoy the splendour of the moon. But when she came to Pārvatī's face, she could taste the joy the dwelling of which is both (the moon and the lotus).

The moon, *candra*, is the highest beauty at night; the lotus is the highest beauty at day. They are apparently irreconcilable. But in Pārvatī's face this opposition vanishes, and Beauty, Lakṣmi, finds her perfect unified expression. Kālidāsa further deploys all his cunning to describe Pārvatī's beauty, comparing her with everything that is beautiful in nature. Her voice

is sweeter than the songs of birds; her beautiful eyes are like blue lotuses or like the eyes of antelopes. In this way, her body becomes the most harmonious, the most total image of nature.

But I should add without delay that the suggestive elements as we have seen do hardly ever exist in a state of perfect purity : there is almost always a certain amount of immixture which bring about other elements, not relevant to the matter at hand. This contamination is very natural, for a poet's vision is global and multifacetted whereas when we try to separate a certain element we proceed in a narrow linear path. This is also evinced by the fact that a same image suggests various things in various contexts. We should therefore move with great caution among these suggestive elements if we want to grasp even partially the world of a poet.

Pārvatī, we have seen from the previous considerations, combines in her body the elements of nature. But her identification is far from complete; she remains still aloof; there is still the sense of separateness and of superiority. Her beauty surpasses all that is beautiful in nature, *loke* (1.36). The poet can find no similes for her perfect thighs : the well-known similes of the elephant's trunk or the trunk of the banana-tree cannot serve his purpose, for the one has a rough skin, the other is too cold (1.36). When compared to her voice the song of the cuckoo seemed harsh and false (1.45); her hair would put to shame the bushy-tailed *camarī* (1.48). The separateness is also marked by the use of artificial ornaments and make up; Pārvatī wears *nūpura*, anklets (1.34), pearl-necklace (1.42) etc. But we shall see that in order to identify herself with nature she abandons these artificialities (5.10, 11).

In some other context these comparisons could be taken only as a stock of trade of the classical Sanskrit poet. But KS, especially when we read further Pārvatī's association with Kāma and Vasanta, leaves no place for doubt that there is here something more than battered similes.

Kāma, after being commissioned by Indra to awake desire in Śiva's heart, reaches the penance-grove where all nature stands still. The presence of his friend Vasanta, gives new life; there is an awakening in nature but it is a soulless awakening, the divinity of nature is not there. She comes as Pārvatī, accompanied by her two friends, who are called *vana-devatā*, forest-deities. Why are the two friends, who have been mentioned earlier (1.58), called forest-deities ? All the women of Osadhiprastha, the city of the Mountain king are *vana-devatā* (6, 39) (4). However the special mention of this fact is significant; for this indicates that Pārvatī is the princess of these forest-deities, therefore the highest deity of nature. The five verses (52-56),

which describe her, are indeed magnificent. I shall here quote what Raghavan says about them, "Out of the vivid background, Devī steps out as a natural emergence, looking like all the vernal beauty taken shape. She was bedecked with the jewellery of the Spring flowers, *aśoka* outshining rubies, *karṇikāra*, gold and *sindhuvāra*, pearl; slightly bent with her breasts, wearing a garment of the hue of the resplendent sun, she appeared verily like a creeper bent with its flower-clusters and sprouts, which had started moving; the girdle of *keśara* flowers was slipping often and she was holding it up again and again by one hand...." (5) Indeed Pārvatī appeared as the Beauty of spring incarnate.

We shall see somewhat more in detail one of the verses, which, it seems, suggests this aspect quite clearly :

> āvarjitā kiṃcid iva stanābhyāṃ vāso vasānā taruṇārka-rāgam
> paryāpta-puṣpa-stabakāvanamrā saṃcāriṇī pallavinī lateva
> (3, 54)

> Slightly leaning forward due to (the weight of) her breasts, wearing a garment red like the rising sun, she was like a moving creeper with new foliage bent down with the weight of abundant flower-clusters.

In spite of the particle *iva*, "like", the similarity, *sādharmya*, between Pārvatī and the creeper is fully established. The creeper sprouting, moving, full of lush beauty, imparts the idea of begetting and growth, the idea of living dynamism, which are characteristics of nature. Moreover this image strikes us as a deviation from the well-known tree-creeper image representing the union of man and woman. However, the tree is not far away. The tree fixed, unmoving is a fit image of Puruṣa. That tree-image is found in the word *sthānu*. In this scene Śiva is referred to as *Sthānu* (3.23) and the wood as *sthānu-vana* (3.34). The word *sthānu* is an epithet of Śiva but it also means "a branchless trunk or stem, any bare stalk or stem." (Apte). Raghavan notices this double-entendre and writes, "Other *sthānu*, barren tree-trunks, might have been affected by spring but not the *sthānu* Śiva."

The idea of the separation between Puruṣa and the Universal Nature is also made evident in the description of the gods (Book 2). They too have lost all their vigour and strength, their beauty and lustre. They too have become like *sthānu*. Nature is body and power of the spirit. In the Upaniṣadic vision the spirit and nature are in constant communion in *sarga*, the created world. This idea is beautifully expressed by Sri Aurobindo, "The power of the Flame cannot be divided from the Flame; where the Flame is, there is the power, and where the power is there is the fiery

Principle".[7] But in KS the period which we are studying at present is suggestive of *laya*, the period between two epochs of creations. Satī, the former feminine counterpart of Śiva is dead. And although she is reborn as Pārvatī the complete justification and significance of this birth is not yet evident. The justification and significance lies in her union with Śiva. And that is possible only after her second birth, birth in divine love after the purification by *tapas*. And we know that, only after the union of the universal nature with *Sthānu*, the gods too will regain their real dominion, their beauty and lustre, *dyutim ātmiyām* (2.19), that is to say, a new creation will begin. Mark the descriptions :

> Indra's thunderbolt : *praśamād arciṣām...kuṇṭhitā-śrīva* (2.20), "with the the loss of its lustre, its beauty seemed tarnished";
> the noose of Pracetas : *mantreṇa hata-vīryasya phaṇino dainyam āśritaḥ* (2.21), "seemed weak like a snake whose power was destroyed by a magic spell";
>
> Kubera's arm without the mace, *gadā : bhagna-śākha iva drumaḥ* (2.22), "like a tree with its branches broken";
>
> Yama's rod is *astamita-tvis*, "the lustre of which is lost", and has attained the low status of a *nirvāṇālāta* (2.23), "extinguished fire-brand";
>
> the Āditya : *pratāpa-kṣati-śītalāḥ citra-nyastā iva gatāḥ prakāmālokaniyatām* (2.24),
> "losing their burning splendour they have become like painted pictures which can be looked at easily ;
>
> the Marut have lost their speed, *vega-bhaṅga* (2.25) ;
> and the roar, *huṃkāra,* of the Rudra is silent (2.26).

Further Bṛhaspati says to Brahmā that all the forces of nature are enslaved by the demon Tāraka (2.33 ff). This enslavement of nature will end only after the union of Śiva and Pārvatī, when Kumāra, their son will be born. We should notice that the birth of Kumāra is only a consequence ; it is the union which is significant. The union of Śiva and Pārvatī is the reunion of the gods with their power, with their real nature. This power that will restore the strength of the gods is a part of Śiva's seed (2.57) ; and the ground fit to receive this *retas*, seed, is Pārvatī : *tad-vīrya-niṣeka-bhūmi* (3.16).

This concept of *bhūmi* again takes us back to the notion of *kṣetra* and *kṣetrajña* of the Gītā (Book XIII). And the *kṣetra* is nature within which,

pervading which, resides the spirit-*jyotiṣām api taj-jyotis tamasaḥ param ucyate* (Gītā, XIII, 18), "the Light of all lights, He is said to be beyond darkness".

Pārvatī's identification with nature is most complete in Book 5. The distance and the artificiality which were still there previously disappear; she becomes Nature herself, the Mother Nature ready for union with the universal spirit, *Viśvātman* (6.1). Notice this significant use of *Viśvātman* : it is used for the first time in the very first verse of Book 6 called, *Umā-pradāna*, "Pārvatī given in marriage" and only after Pārvatī has become completely one with nature. Again in the same Book the epithet is used for the second time in the context of the marriage of Pārvatī. When the seven *ṛṣi* ask Himālaya to give his daughter to Śiva, Himālaya takes Pārvatī and says :

ehi Viśvātmane vatse bhikṣāsi parikalpitā (6.88)

Come, child, you are made the alms to Śiva, the soul of the universe.

At the very opening of Book 5 we find a new tone, a turning point in Pārvatī's life. For her own fulfilment she has to change herself; upto now she has seen only one aspect of life, of nature : she, as the personification of nature, has the partial experience of the pleasant and the gentle comforts in the royal palace. But life and nature have also the opposite aspects of the unpleasant, the harsh, the terrible. She must know both, hold both in her being without being tormented by these opposites. Pain and delight must find equal place in her. Then only can she be the true figure, true symbol of nature. Therefore her decision to go to the forests, *araṇyanivāsa* (5.6) and practise *muni-vrata* (5.3), the vow of the ascetic, is very significant : it is by following the *muni-vrata* that she can gather the opposites of nature in her being. For, the Gītā defines the *muni* :

duḥkheṣv anudvigna–manāḥ sukheṣu vigata-spṛhaḥ
vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhaḥ sthita-dhīr munir ucyate (II. 56)

He whose mind is not troubled by sorrows, who has no longing for pleasure, who is free from liking, fear and anger, is called a sage, *muni*, with a calm intelligence.

But in order to achieve this equanimity she has first of all to abandon all that kept her away from real nature. And she begins one by one to strip off all that was artificial, all that had kept her far from the natural life of things, bound to a life of luxury :

vimucya sā hāram ahārya-niścayā vilola-yaṣṭi-pravilupta-candanam
babandha bālāruṇa-babhru valkalaṃ payodharotsedha-viśīrṇa-saṃhati
(5.8)

She with a firm determination removed her pearl-necklace the rows of which moving to and fro used to rub off the sandalpaste (from her breasts) ; and she wore a garment of bark tawny-red like the rising sun-a garment which her high breasts did not let cling closely (to her body).

She casts off the necklace, which means giving up of her previous partial and untrue nature; the sandal paste which used to cover her breast is already wiped away, and in its place she puts on a piece of bark tawny-red like the first hues of dawn, *bālāruṇa-babhru valkalam*. That the bark is the substitution of the sandal paste, *candana*, which covered her breasts is also indicated by the colour of the bark. It is evident that Kālidāsa is not speaking of the white sandal paste, but of the red sandal, *rakta-candana*, for the poet speaks a few verses below of *stanāṅga-rāgāruṇita* (5.11). The description further suggests Pārvatī's affinity with the dawn. She begins to universalize herself and break the boundaries of her limited existence.

The next verse too evokes the growing naturalness without any artifice : her hair was fair and adorned but now the tresses are matted. But this is not a diminution; this is the expression of natural beauty, a lotus is as beautiful with moss as with rows of bees—

na ṣaṭ-pada-śreṇibhir eva paṅkajaṃ sa-śaivalāsaṅgam api prakāśate (5.9)

A lotus does not grow lovely only with rows of bees but also in contact with moss.

Here we should notice the contrast in the metaphor : the first part gives a well-known metaphor applied to the *nāyikā*-heroine ; it is polished and learned, but in its place we now have a metaphor which is natural and wild. Who would dare compare the tresses of the *nāyikā* with the moss if it were not with a special purpose ?

Pārvatī also replaces her girdle by strings of rough *muñja*-grass which give her pain (5.11). She who was wont to sleep on the softest coach slept now on the bare altar-ground (5.12). Thus she comes to know the hard and harsh side of creation. All these show that she is growing more and more akin to the many-sided nature. Artificial things, things that are not inherent to her being are abandoned. But she, even for her austerities, does not renounce those things which show her oneness with the moving and the unmoving world. Therefore Kālidāsa says that Pārvatī only lays by, for the period of her austerities, her *vilāsa-ceṣṭitam*, graceful coquetry, and her *vilola-*

dṛṣṭam, tremulous glances. Only in her perfected being will she be a fit depository of nature's beauty, not if she is impoverished and diminished through a rigid ascetic denial of the world.

punar grahituṃ niyamasthayā tayā dvaye, pi nikṣepa ivārpitaṃ dvayam
latāsu tanvīṣu vilāsa-ceṣṭitaṃ vilola-dṛṣṭaṃ hariṇāṅganāsu ca
(5.13)

Engaged in practising austerities she entrusted, as it were, for safe keeping with two classes of things two of her possessions which she would take back later; to the slender creepers her graceful coquetry, to the female deer her tremulous glances.

This verse shows her identity with both the vegetable world and the animal world. Its purport is to suggest that, from her very birth, Pārvatī, as we have also elsewhere noted, is the incarnation of nature, but nature has now to be pure and really universal before she can find her fulfilment in union with the Spirit.

In the next two verses we find a first partial fulfilment.

atandritā sā svayam eva vṛkṣakān ghaṭa-stana-prasravaṇair vyavardhayat
Guho, pi yeṣām prathamāpta-janmanā na putra-vātsalyam apākariṣyati
(5.14)

araṇya-bījāñjali-dāna-lālitās tathā ca tasyāṃ hariṇā viśaśvasuḥ
yathā tadīyair nayanaiḥ kutūhalāt puraḥ sakhīnām amimīta locane
(5.15)

Unwearied she herself fostered the young trees with the flow of water from jars which were, so to say, the maternal breasts. And even Kumāra would not make her forget her motherly affection for these which had the right of the first-born.

And the antelopes which she nurtured fondly by giving handfuls of forest grain, had so much trust on her that she, out of curiosity used to measure her eyes with theirs in front of her friends.

At first we notice how skilfully with just some suggestive touches Kālidāsa brings out the idea that Pārvatī is the Mother Nature, who unwearied, *atandritā*,—takes care of her children. She is also the nourisher: the terse compound *ghaṭa-stana-prasravana* brings to our mind many suggestions : she is also the mother, the milk of her breast is water,—rain, springs--

which give life and vigour. And in this context the mention of Kumāra who is to be born for the liberation of the gods also conveys the meaning that this first metaphorical motherhood is in essence the same. Śhe is the mother-to-be of Kumāra who is to free the forces of nature, the gods, from the tyranny of the demon. Kumāra is thus the vigour of nature born from the seed of Śiva on the ground, *bhūmi*, which is Pārvatī. Thus the growth of the *vṛkṣaka*, the sapling, is the growth of nature itself.

The second verse develops further the notion of nourishment. Previously it was the nourishment of the vegetable life, now it is of the animal life. This verse further establishes Pārvatī's intimacy with nature, her oneness with nature. This is suggested by *amimita* : she measured her eyes with those of the antelopes, thus become equal to nature in all its beauty.

The next two verses sum up another partial attainment : we see here that all nature has attained the stage of *dharma* ; and Pārvatī is there as the dharmic nature. Notice the word *dharma-vṛddha*. And what is the significance of this *dharma* ? It is the reconciliation of the opposites in nature which is the leitmotif of this Book.

virodhi-sattvojjhita-pūrva-matsaraṃ drumair abhiṣṭa-prasavārcitā-tithi
navoṭajābhyantara-saṃbhṛtānalaṃ tapo-vanaṃ tac ca babhūva pāvanam
(5.17)

The penance-grove too became pure-the grove where wild beasts forgot their former hostility, where trees honoured the guests with the gift of desired fruits, where fire was kindled in the newly thatched huts.

As Mallinātha has remarked, we find here the expression of three of the highest *dharmic* duties : *ahiṃsā*, non-cruelty to all creatures*; atithi-satkāra*, hospitality; and *agni-paricaryā*, tending of the sacred fire. Nature has thus reached a stage of moral perfection, but Pārvatī as nature must prepare herself even physically in order to unite with the Lord ; spiritually she is the Mother Nature, ethically she is now pure ; but for the union she must be physically perfect ; she must become the body of nature, must become the Earth. This is the progression that is marked in the following verses. Let us consider a few of the more significant ones :

dhruvaṃ vapuḥ kāñcana-padma-nirmitaṃ mṛdu prakṛtyā ca sasāram
eva ca (5.19)

Truly, her body was made of gold-lotuses; it was by its very nature delicate (like the lotus) and strong (like gold).

We should ponder over the words *mṛdu* and *sa-sāram* in association with the gold-lotus. In this image are combined two notions which the words *mṛdu* and *sa-sāra* try to explicit. Here gold and lotus are amalgamated; the various images of lotus applied to Pārvatī have always refered to her beauty, a beauty that is gentle. The word *mṛdu* refers to that beauty, and at the same time to the motherly aspect. Speaking in particular of this image, Raghavan says that it brings out her "beauty, strength and compassion ."—(8) On the other hand *sa-sāra* refers to gold. The lotus seems to be something evanescent, its fragrance and colour are subtle, almost mystical; but gold gives the idea of purity, brightness and also substance and solidity. What does "*sāra*", convey to us ? Mallinatha gives for *sa-sāram* the word *kaṭhinam*, hard. But *sāra* means much more than only hardness; it also means *substance*, hard solid substance. We should not miss this implication; here we have the notion of strength, endurance, and at the same time of substantiality, of concreteness. Indeed when we read further we notice how Pārvatī's body is associated with several elements, *bhūta*. She is first associated with fire : she sits surrounded by four fires on the ground and above her head blazes the fifth fire, the sun (5.20). And gradually she identifies herself with the fire. This is very cleverly suggested in the following verse :

> tathāti-taptaṃ savitur gabhastibhir mukhaṃ tadīyam kamala-śriyaṃ dadhau
>
> apāṅgayoḥ kevalam asya dīrghayoḥ śanaiḥ śanaiḥ śyāmikayā kṛtaṃ padam (5.21)
>
> In this way her face extremely scorched by the sun's rays took on the beauty of the red lotus; only the elongated corners of her eyes were gradually invaded by a dark hue.

Her face assumes the beauty of the lotus but the rays made dark the long corners *apāṅga*, of her eyes. This description suggests the image of a burning flame the colour of which is like that of the red lotus, with a slight trace of smoke. If there was no mention of *śyāmikā*, one could brush aside this reading; but *śyamikā* is significant, for if we do not accept this image we find that it is nothing but a tame description. The weakness in the latter case is quite evident in Mallināthā's interpretation : he says that the *apāṅga* have become black because of their softness, *saukumāryāt*. But then the question arises at once, "Is Pārvatī's face not *sukumāra* ? Why should only the *apāṅga* be *sukumāra* instead of the whole face ?" Therefore it seems beyond doubt that Kālidāsa wants to say that her whole face has become like a flaming fire.

The next verse reveals the association of Pārvatī with water : she sustains her life by drinking only the water that falls as rain ; her life-sap is like the sap of the tree (5.22).

Finally we find that Kālidāsa metaphorically conveys to us her identity with the earth :

> nikāma-taptā vividhena vahninā nabhaś-careṇendhana-saṃbhṛtena sā
> tapātyaye vāribhir ukṣitā navair bhuvā sahoṣmāṇam amuñcad ūrdhva-gam (5.23)
> sthitāḥ kṣaṇaṃ pakṣmasu tāḍitādharāḥ payodharotsedha-nipāta-cūrṇitāḥ
> valīṣu tasyāḥ skhalitāḥ prapedire cireṇa nābhiṃ prathamoda-bindavaḥ (5.24)

> Scorched fiercely by all kinds of fires,—those that move in the sky and those that are fed by wood—, she, at the end of the summer, sprinkled with the new rain, exhaled, along with the earth, vapours that mounted upwards.
>
> The first drops of water balanced for a while on her eye-lashes ; then hit her lower lips ; they were shattered as they fell on the summits of her breasts ; from there tripping over the skin-folds of her belly they, after a long time, entered into her navel.

The first verse identifies Pārvatī with the earth in one way, and the second verse in a different way. We notice in the first several equations :

> as the earth is scorched so is Pārvatī ;
> as rain falls on the earth so does it fall on Pārvatī's body ;
> as the earth exhales *uṣman*, vapour, so does Pārvatī.

We have not to look far for the conclusion : one can easily infer that Pārvatī is similar to the earth, identical to the earth.

The next verse also shows the identity in a different way : it is less logical, more imaginative. Drops of water fall from the sky and glide down her body ; such is the simple description. As such we find here a wealth of keen observation and a power of graphic reproduction. But there is much more to it. Does it not suggest the flow of a river, most probably the Ganges ? This river comes down from Heaven and falls on the matted hair of Śiva,—here the water-drops hesitate for an instant on Pārvatī's eye-lashes. From Śiva's hair the Ganges falls on the earth with some violence ; here the drops fall on the lips also with some violence—*taḍitādharāḥ* suggests

the impetuosity of the fall. The river then flows down in cascades falling from rocks to rocks and then once below it meanders through the valleys down to the sea. Likewise drops fall on her breasts and break, *payodharotsedha-nipāta-cūrṇitāḥ*—and then they flow further down through the *vali*, the skin-folds on the belly. Mark the appropriateness of these suggestions ! And finally after a long time, *cireṇa*, they reach the sea of her navel. The adjective *skhalitaḥ* stumbling along, tripping along, is also very appropriate for the river flowing through hills and dales.

This image identifies Pārvatī completely with the earth. She is not only the Mother Nature, but is also the physical material nature, this earth.

The whole passage is rich in suggestion; there are various movements of thought, a gradual addition of elements which lead us inevitably to two important conclusions, to two climaxes, the first is the identification of Pārvatī with Mother Nature, the other her identification with the earth.

There is hardly any necessity to probe into the meaning of Śiva in this context. He is the Puruṣa, as Pārvatī is the Prakṛti; He is the witness of all the actions of the universe as she is the universe, and He is the Father of creation as she is the Mother.

The seven *ṛṣi* go to King Himālaya and describing the future bridegroom say :

kalitānyonya-sāmarthyaiḥ pṛthivyādibhir ātmabhiḥ
yenedaṃ dhriyate vyaktaṃ dhuryair yānam ivādhvani (6.76)

He carries the manifested world by means of the earth and other forms of himself which lend strength to one another, as horses (lending strength to one another) pull the chariot on the road.

yogino yaṃ vicinvanti kṣetrābhyāntara-vartinam... (6.77)

The yogin seek him who resides in the depth of the body-field...

sa (. .) sākṣī viśvasya karmaṇām (6.78)

He (...) the witness of the doings of the world...

yāvanty etāni bhūtāni sthāvarāṇi carāṇi ca
mātaraṃ kalpayantv enām īśo hi jagataḥ pitā (6.80)

May all created things, moving and unmoving, make her their mother : for the Lord is the father of the manifested world.

The analysis of the first verse reveals three elements : Śiva, *pṛthivyādi* and *vyakta* which are compared to *adhvan*, *dhurya* and *yāna*. Śiva is the

support of the universe with all its objects. This verse puts concretely the idea of the Īśa Upaniṣad :

īśā vāsyam idaṃ sarvaṃ yat kiṃ ca jagatyāṃ jagat

All this, whatever moves in this moving world, is the habitation of the Lord (or : covered by the Lord).

In this Upaniṣadic line too we find three interconnected constituents, Īśa, the Lord, pervades all that is moving in *jagati*, the universe. This interdependence of the three is clearly expressed by Sri Aurobindo when he writes that here in this line is expressed "the idea of the one and stable spirit inhabiting and governing a universe of movement and of the forms of movement."[10] The Spirit, Īśa, is the Cosmic Lord : "The Supreme is viewed not as the Absolute *Brahman* but as the Cosmic Lord,"[11] comments Radhakrishnan on this line. We see therefore that the three elements spoken of in this Upaniṣad are :

(i) the Cosmic spirit, *Īśa*
(ii) the universe of movement, *jagati*
(iii) the forms of movement, *idaṃ sarvaṃ yat kiṃ ca jagat*

And now when we put the Kālidāsian verse side by side with this there remains no scope of doubt that here Kālidāsa is speaking of Śiva as the cosmic spirit supporting nature and becoming nature in his eightfold form of fire, water, earth etc. with which Pārvatī has identified herself.

The expression *kṣetrābhyantara-vartin* of the next verse again says clearly that Śiva is the Puruṣa pervading the *kṣetra*, Prakṛti. This notion of the Sāṃkhyan Puruṣa is further exemplified by the notion of *sākṣitva*. He is the witness of all the works, all the modifications of the world. The Sāṃkhyakārikā speaks of the witness Spirit, *sōkṣitvam asya puruṣasya* (Kār. 19) ; the Gītā too speaks of the witness (IX. 18). All these show that Śiva, in this context, is the cosmic Puruṣa corresponding to the universal and material aspects of nature.

But there is the third important aspect of nature, the Mother. The last verse under consideration says in no hooded terms that Pārvatī is the mother of all that is moving and unmoving, and Śiva, the father.

This verse also speaks of the union between the two. We therefore see that Śiva and Pārvatī symbolize Puruṣa-Prakṛti in different levels of consciousness, as Uttama Puruṣa and Parā Prakṛti, Cosmic Spirit and Universal Nature, as the Father of the universe, *jagataḥ pitā*, and the Mother Nature,

Avatāra and the Individual Soul

Before we proceed to other matters we should discuss another important symbolism which we can discover in the Śiva-Pārvatī figures. This is the relation between *avatāra*, God incarnate, and Man, the individual evolutionary being, the human soul.

The doctrine of *avatāra* has been a living and dynamic influence in Vaiṣṇavism. Historically seen it was not associated from the very beginning with Viṣṇu; it is to be found in a germinal form in some of the accounts of Prajāpati in the Brāhmaṇa literature and also in ṚV, connected with Viṣṇu, Indra and the Aśvin.[12] But gradually the doctrine came to be associated with the Purāṇic Viṣṇu and even incarnations of other gods came to be regarded as Viṣṇu's. But it was in the Gītā that the doctrine was postulated on a sound philosophical foundation.

When we turn our attention to Śaivism we see a different situation. It is true that some Purāṇa speak of Śiva's incarnations. In fact twenty-eight *avatāra* of Śiva are mentioned, and it is said that the last name variously known as Lakulīśa or Lakulin was a contemporary of Kṛṣṇa and Vyāsa. Scholars think that Lakulīśa was a historical figure, who lived and spread Śiva-cult in Western India, and who is accepted as Śiva's full incarnation.[13] However neither he, nor the other twenty-seven *avatāra* ever attained to the high status of some of Viṣṇu's *avatāra*.

When we compare the growth of the Śaiva sects with that of the Vaiṣṇava we find that the main features, figures and symbols of the latter grew up around at least one historical person Vasudeva-Kṛṣṇa, though many myths and legends, Vedic Puranic and popular, were gradually grafted to the deeds of the central figure who came to be identified with the Vedic Viṣṇu.[14] Says J. N. Banerjee, "But when we enquire about the primitive form of Śiva, the principal Deity of the Śaiva religious sects, we find that it developed on the basis of a godhead who was primarily mythical."[15] This difference perhaps explains, up to a certain extent, the role that *avatāra* have in Vaiṣṇavism, and do not have in the cult of Śiva.

Poetically, the *avatāra* is a powerful theme because of his humanness; he is a Man. He had human birth and follows apparently at least the same physical and mental life-course. However he is seen also as God himself; he is the bridge between Man and God, between Earth and Heaven. He has birth and death; and he acts; although his birth is divine, and his work too, *janma karma ca me divyam* (Gītā. IV. 9), yet he is not aloof, not an abstract idea. We can love him, and make our life and action divine. The *avatāra*-

doctrine affords, writes S. K. De, "tangible and effective divine ideals towards which imperfect mortals may strive and grow."[16]

Poetry cannot flourish in the world of abstract ideas ; it needs the sap of life, the concreteness of form in order to develop. This is perhaps the reason why Kṛṣṇa and Rāma became such favoured themes of Vaiṣṇava poets and dramatists, not Viṣṇu, the supreme God of the Vaiṣṇava.

For the Śaiva poets not an *avatāra* but Śiva himself was the favoured theme. Whereas Kṛṣṇa and Rāma were men who were made God and finally seen as the descent of God in human birth, Śiva, the supreme god was made man though he did not assume the human birth. Śiva of KS is therefore not an *avatāra*, in the doctrinal meaning of the word, but when we read the poem we see that he has the characteristics of the *avatāra* ; he is divine, but at the same time, human and near to the human.

The *avatāra*-doctrine, we know, got its full implication in the Gītā. And the Gītā's ideas have found symbolic and also undisguised utterance in KS. We shall therefore try first to grasp some of the implications of the doctrine as expounded in the Gītā, and then read KS to find out how for Kālidāsa Śiva symbolizes the *avatāra*, God become man, and Pārvatī, the aspiring human soul.

The notion of *avatāra* implies the descent of God in humanity, the revelation of the Spirit not only as knowledge, light, love, joy or power in the heart and inner vision of the seeker but as a physical being who can be respected and loved as one respects and loves the parents, the lover, the husband, the friend. He is the Absolute and Infinite who takes birth and assumes human modes of action. He is the Supreme Lord, Puruṣottama, Maheśvara, who resorts to the human body, *mānuṣīm tanum āśritam* (Gītā. IX, 11) ; his beauty and form is human and close to the human, not awe-inspiring, not distant, *mānuṣṃ rūpaṃ tava saumyam* (Gītā. XI. 51).

Kṛṣṇa is this *avatāra* in the Gītā. But beside him there is Arjuna, the man, the seeker to whom the *avatāra* reveals the supreme knowledge, reveals also his true self. The relation Kṛṣṇa-Arjuna has its eternal counterpart in Nara-Nārāyaṇa, the eternal human soul and the Supreme Lord. In Vaiṣṇavism we find this eternal pair manifested besides Kṛṣṇa-Arjuna, as Kṛṣṇa-Rādhā. The latter theme developed somewhat later, but once it took shape it became a tremendous force in poetry. This heterosexual pair gave the poet the possibility of deploying the relation with all the strength and concreteness of erotic poetry, using the rich and variously suggestive imageries and conventions of the *śṛṅgāra*. In mystic poetry the search of the

human soul for the divine lover and the final joy of union have most often been vigorously suggested by erotic metaphors.[17]

By this I do not mean to suggest that KS is a piece of mystic poetry. It is also not philosophical poetry. But as we have said in the very beginning, many philosophical ideas have found poetic and concrete expression here. What we are trying at present to do is to disentangle the idea of the *avatāra* and his relation to the human soul. And in KS this relation too is suggested by the pair Śiva-Pārvatī. Erotic images are used to suggest the search and the union but they do not have either the mystic fervour, or the directness of emotional experience, or the spontaneity of mystic expression. Kālidāsa remains always conscious of the poetic art. His calm sense of measure, the chasteness and sobreity of his expression, debar him from spontaneous outburst of feelings and experiences.

In Kālidāsa's use of the multifaceted symbol of Śiva and Pārvatī we find that the two figures represent, on the human individual level of existence, the notion of Nara-Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa-Arjuna or the more recent Kṛṣṇa-Rādhā.

We must here remember that Kālidāsa was the first poet to make a poetic use of this fundamental philosophical notion. We do not know what was the role of KS in the formation of the Kṛṣṇa-Rādhā imagery. But we must note one thing : Śiva-Pārvatī theme was never again used with such vigour in Indian poetry; as the Kṛṣṇa-Rādhā theme was used by Jayadeva and other Vaiṣṇava poets.[18]

We have said that the *avatāra* has a human body. Strictly speaking neither Śiva nor Pārvatī are human. But when we read the poem we find that not only in the general atmosphere but also in some important details Kālidāsa has unmistakably hinted at their humanness.

In fact it is not the historicity of an *avatāra* which is important ; it is rather the sense of humanity, the power of God to appear before us in the finite form, the human, *mānuṣaṃ rūpam*, which makes us feel that he is near to us. And Kālidāsa has truly succeeded in bringing both Śiva and Pārvatī close to our life as representatives of our aspirations and our goal.

Śiva is seen by the poet as the supreme Lord,—there is no doubt about it : he is the supreme beyond darkness, neither Viṣṇu nor Brahmā can know him fully. He is the transcendental and cosmic spirit, he is *deva-deva*, God of the gods (1.52), *jagat-pati*, Lord of the moving world (5.60), *bhūta-pati*, Lord of creatures (3.7.6), *jagat-pitṛ*, father of the universe (6.80), *acyuta*,

imperishable (5.71), *Maheśvara* (5.65); Īśvara (7.62) Īśa (7.95) etc. But soon after he is introduced we are made familiar with him. He is God of the gods, yet when he lost his former wife Satī, he renounced everything, *vimukta-saṃga* (1.53). Kālidāsa invokes the mythological story not just for the sake of mythical tales of wonder but with a definite purpose : in order to stress the concreteness and power of his love, the poignancy of his grief, in brief his nearness to the human being. Here we may think of the idea of *śmaśāna-vairāgya*, temporary renunciation of the worldly life at the sight of the dead being burnt, a fact which shows the transitoriness of this life and this world. This is a very human reaction; we feel at once that Śiva is not a far-off god, unmoved by human emotions.

This verse also points to another fact, namely, that the relation Śiva-Pārvatī, is eternal, like that of Nara-Nārāyaṇa. And further shows that Pārvatī has birth as well as death. She really is human, the eternal portion of the Divine caught in the noose of birth and death, as all human beings are. Moreover the description of Pārvatī's childhood, her youth, her love, her desires and aspirations show that she is meant to be human, though, to be sure, with all the other implications of her nature. We need not therefore elaborate the role of Pārvatī as the seeking soul, we shall only concentrate on the aspect of Śiva.

Śiva is the Supreme who, we are shown, appears and acts in the manner of a finite man. The Infinite, the Imperishable, *acyuta*, the Lord of the creatures, *bhūta-pati*, clothes himself in the garb of phenomenal existence, without losing his Infinity. Kṛṣṇa in the Gītā says :

> ajo, pi sann avyayātmā bhūtānām īśvaro, pi san
> prakṛtiṃ svam adhiṣṭhāya saṃbhavāmy ātma-māyayā (IV. 6)

> Though I am unborn, though my self is imperishable, though I am the Lord of all creatures, yet standing upon my own nature I manifest myself by the power of my divine magic (*māyā*).

We shall also see that in KS Śiva assumes human forms without ever losing his true consciousness. Kālidāsa has given to the word *ātma-māyayā* a very concrete meaning, that of supernatural magical powers. Philosophically speaking we may say that this *māyā* is the power of the Brahman to "become" the world and all its forms.

But why should the Infinite, the Perfect, descend into the finiteness and take up the appearance of imperfectness in this phenomenal existence ? The answer of the Gītā is given in two steps. The first answer is meant for the

world in general, in order to establish a moral and religious law governing our life and action :

...dharma-saṃsthāpanārthāya saṃbhavāmi yuge yuge (Gītā. IV. 8)
...in order to establish *dharma* I take birth in every age.

This is the first aim But *dharma* is not the final aim of existence. There is liberation. And what is liberation but the union of the human with the Divine, the knowledge and realisation that the *jīva* is *Śiva*. In the words of the Gītā the liberated are *mad-bhāvam āgatāḥ* (IV. 10) : those who have attained my divine nature. And for attaining this highest state one has even to abandon all *dharma*; one has to give himself up completely, without reserve, to the Lord in a perfect union with Him. Then there will be no law of action, no good or evil, no *dharma* :

sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṃ śaraṇaṃ vraja... (XVIII. 66)
Abandon all *dharma* and take refuge in me alone...

Such is the meaning and purpose of the *avatāra*. In his analysis and commentary on this teaching of the Gītā, what Sri Aurobindo writes, merits our special attention for the understanding of Kālidāsa's presentation of Śiva :

"...we have to remark carefully that the upholding of Dharma in the world is not the only object of the descent of the Avatār, that great mystery of the Divine manifest in humanity; for the upholding of the Dharma is not an all-sufficient object in itself, not the supreme possible aim for the manifestation of a Christ, a Krishna, a Buddha, but is only the general condition of a higher aim and a more supreme and divine utility. For there are two aspects of the divine birth; one is a descent, the birth of God in humanity, the Godhead manifesting itself in the human form and nature, the eternal Avatār; the other is an ascent, the birth of man into the Godhead, man rising into the divine nature and consciousness, *madbhāvam āgatāḥ*; it is the being born anew in a second birth of the soul. It is that new birth which Avatārhood and the upholding of the Dharma are intended to serve."[19]

We shall study the ascent of the human soul, the spiritual growth and final union of Pārvatī with Śiva. Here we shall take up the first part—descent and upholding of *dharma*, and the relation between the human and the divine.

In KS we distinguish clearly three concrete forms of Śiva : (a) the ascetic, (b) the brahmacārin, (c) the bridegroom, husband and lover,

Kālidāsa has described all these aspects with sobriety yet with intense power and vividness of expression. All the three aspects become living; we see them as men of flesh and blood. Here as elsewhere, there is at work his unfailing justness of observation or visualizing faculty coupled with the power of concrete representation.

Kālidāsa did not favour the extreme ascetic tendency with its denial of the world : the fourfold scheme devised to keep in view the full progress of the individual life was neglected by the ascetic ideal which prescribed the renunciation of life as soon as possible.

He accepted the scheme of *catur-varga*, the fourfold aim of life, but gave to the last ideal, *mokṣa* not the meaning of world-denial and self-denial but that of world-fulfilment and self-fulfilment, in union with the Supreme. Denial was not the goal in itself; it was only a passage to an integral acceptance which could be achieved and should be achieved here and now, in the stage of the *gṛhastha*, the householder. The rejection of the extreme form of asceticism is reflected in th order in which our poet represents the three forms of Śiva.

Kālidāsa seems to say that asceticism is an ideal which has to be surpassed; it is the old ideal of spirituality. Consequently the ascetic Śiva becomes a *brahmacārin* and a *gṛhastha*. But he is not a fanatic, and does not condemn asceticism. The ascetic Śiva is depicted as the greatest ideal of asceticism. He is an example to those who choose the ascetic path.

The *avatāra* teaches by example; he who has become man acts as man, and shows that every man is capable of what he himself has attained. By his attainment, the Supreme God, becomes the best among man, *śreṣṭha*, and becomes an example, a teacher, a guide :

yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhaḥ tat tad evetaro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇaṃ kurute lokas tad anuvartate (Gītā. III. 21)

Whatever things the best among men do, others do those very things. The standard they lay down, that the whole world follows.

Or again says Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna :

mama vartmān anuvartante manuṣyāḥ Pārtha sarvaśaḥ (Gītā. IV. 11)

O Pārtha, in all matters men follow my path.

Śiva as an ascetic shows at first the path of asceticism and extreme renunciation. Those who are attracted by this may follow this path. We have

already seen that Śiva, the ascetic, has been described as ***vimukta-saṃga***, (1.53) free from attachment; the poet adds that Śiva is here ***kṛtti-vāsa*** (1.54) ***kṛṣṇa-tvacaṃ dadhāna*** (3.46) wears deer-skin; and he practices ***tapas*** in front of the fire which he has kindled with sacred wood (1.57)

> tatrāgnim ādhāya samit-samiddham... tapaś cacāra (1.57)
>
> there he set up a fire which he kindled with ritual wood (...) and practised tapas.

We may compare these details with Manu's prescriptions for the ascetic: ***vasita carma cīram vā*** (VI. 6), "should put on deer-skin or tree-bark", and, ***grīṣme pañca-tapās tu syāt*** (VI. 23), "in summer he should practise austerities with the five fires around him." Although here nothing is clearly mentioned about the season and the number of fires we can yet see the resemblance with Manu, and consider these as the first preparations of the ascetic in the forest.

It is in Book 3, that we have a splendid picture of the supreme ascetic, Lord and guide of all those who follow after the austere goal of detachment through the practice of ***yoga***. We need not make a detailed comparison between Kālidāsa's description of postures, breath-control etc. with the standard works on ***yoga***; we shall however quote a few verses to show how concretely Kālidāsa has depicted the ascetic, sitting under a ***devadāru*** tree, ***devadāru-druma-vedikāyām āsīnam*** (3, 44).[20]

> paryaṅka-bandha-sthira-pūrva-kāyaṃ ṛjv-āyataṃ saṃnamito-
> bhayāṃsam... (3.45)
>
> ...immobile he sat in the ***yogic*** posture called ***paryaṅka-bandha*** with the upper body erect and broad, with the two shoulders lowered...

This description of the physical posture, ***āsana***, is a far cry from the description in technical treatises. Here there is nothing general or impersonal. We see, as it were, before our very eyes, the ***yogin*** seated in meditation. The details like ***sthira-pūrva-kāya***, and ***saṃnamitobhayāṃsa*** make of this, not a diagram or schematic representation of a yogic posture but a picture of a living person. Or read this description of ***prāṇāyāma***:[21]

> Like a cloud without the menace of rain, like an ocean without surging waves, subduing the Marut who roam within, (Śiva sat), an unflickering flame in a windless place.

We can place a few lines of the Gītā describing the liberated ***yogin*** beside this picture in order to realize that Kālidāsa is not speaking of the typical

liberated person, but of a very particular person who can be taken by us as an example :

sparśān kṛtvā bahir-bāhyāṃś cakṣus caivāntare bhruvoḥ
prāṇāpānau samau kṛtvā nāsābhyantara-cāriṇau (Gītā. V. 27)

Shutting out all outward contacts, fixing the sight between the eye-brows, equalizing the flow of *prāṇa* and *apāna* breaths in the nostrils...

The description of the Supreme Ascetic, where the poet has deployed all his power of metaphorization and his faculty of visualization[22], brings the great ascetic near to us. Such is the first humanization of Śiva.

The second humanization is in the form of the *brahmacārin*, the student.

Here we find a metamorphosis of Śiva. The Gītā says that the Lord embodies himself by the power of his māyā, *ātma-māyayā* (Gītā. IV. 6). Kālidāsa does not show us the process of this *māyā*, this mysterious magical power, but we who have seen Śiva as the ascetic, see him suddenly appear as a *brahmacārin*. This sudden metamorphosis would suggest the divine power of *māyā*. The mysterious working of the same *māyā* is suggested when at the end Śiva resumes his original form, *sva-rūpam* (5.84). Here in one single verse Kālidāsa makes the student an incarnation :

athājināṣāḍha-dharaḥ pragalbha-vāg jvalann iva brahmamayena tejasā
viveśa kaścij jaṭilas tapo-vanaṃ śarīra-baddhaḥ prathamāśramo yathā
(5.30)

Then a person wearing a deer-skin and matted hair, holding a staff of Palāsa-wood in his hand, a man of sedate speech, burning as it were with the Brahmic lustre, entered the penance-grove like the first stage of life (brahmacarya) incarnate.

The word *śarīra-baddha*, embodied, makes clear the incarnation. Śiva is here incarnated as the student, the first stage of life. And Kālidāsa very succintly, yet completely gives all the characteristics of this stage. This very appearance becomes an example and a teaching of *brahmacarya*.

We distinguish clearly three elements :—

(a) the outward signs of a student : when a student went to the home of the teacher, he had to accept some prescribed rules of conduct regarding clothing, appearance etc. This rule is here evoked by the words *ajināṣāḍha-dhara* and *jaṭila*.

(b) learning : the most important preoccupation of the student was the study of the Vedic literature; he had also to learn the art of speech, the manner of addressing different people in different ways prescribed by the *śāstra*[23] ; he learnt from the *guru* all the *laukika*, worldly, and *vaidika*, Vedic, and finally *ādhyātmika*, spiritual knowledge (Manu. II. 117). The mastery over language and speech, the refinement which comes from learning is expressed here by the word, *pragalbha-vāk*.

(c) spiritual knowledge : the last culminating knowledge, that of the spirit is also acquired by the student from the teacher; it is the student's real birth (Manu. II. 148). This light of the spirit which shines forth when one has the spiritual illumination is here expressed by the expression, *jvalann iva brahmamayena tejasā*, burning as it were with the Brahmic lustre.

The third aspect is more elaborate. We have seen the *brahmacārin* who has completed his studies, has received non-Vedic, Vedic and spiritual knowledge. He is now ready to enter the second and the most important stage of his life, that of the householder. It is also in this stage that one has to fulfil his duties, the three *puruṣārtha*, objects of human life, and finally, reach liberation in union with the Divine. The Manu-smṛti too says that this stage is the resting-place of the other three *āśrama* :

yathā nadi-nadāḥ sarve sāgare yānti saṃsthitim
tathaivāśramiṇaḥ sarve gṛhasthe yānti saṃsthitim (VI. 90)

As all rivers find their rest in the sea, likewise all those who abide by the rules of the *āśrama*, stages of life, find their rest in the householder.

Śiva, the bridegroom, is the third aspect of the incarnation. Here too we find the transformation from the lofty divineness into the lovable human form, *mānuṣam rūpam tava saumyam* (Gītā. XI. 51). The play of the supernatural *māyā* too is more elaborate here. This power is clearly recognized in the word *prabhāva* (7. 36). The metamorphosis is expressed by the miraculous transformation, *bhāvāntara*, of his habitual aspect, his garments and ornaments :

sa eva veṣaḥ pariṇetur iṣṭaṃ bhāvāntaraṃ tasya vibhoḥ prapede (7.31)

The habitual dress of the Supreme Lord underwent a metamorphosis to become suitable for a bridegroom.

We should notice the expression *pariṇetur iṣṭam bhāvāntaram*, "transformation which is suitable for the bridegroom." Śiva is a bridegroom, but his usual feature, his clothes, his ornaments are not proper to one who is going

to marry. Mallinātha grasps rightly the irony. Explaining the words *pariṇetur iṣṭam* he writes, *loka udvoḍhuḥ...apekṣitam*, "that which is expected of a bridegroom in the world." Śiva thus becomes a worldly bridegroom. The ashes on his body become an unguent, *sitāṅgarāga*; the skull which he wears on his head becomes a crown, the blood-dripping elephant-hide becomes an embroidered silk garment; the snakes become ornaments. Even his bodily feature undergoes a change; the third eye changes into a *tilaka*; with these changes Śiva appears as a human bridegroom. (32-35).

The most important sacrament, when one enters the second stage of life, is the wedding.

dvitīyam āyuṣo bhāgaṃ kṛta-dāro gṛhe vaset (Manu. IV. 1)

One should take a wife and pass the second quarter of one's life at home.

It is only after having taken a wife that the student really becomes a *gṛhastha*, householder. After the necessary transformations, Śiva is now an ideal bridegroom, an ideal man of the world. He follows the social laws and hierarchy; shows respect to the respectable according to their dignity and status :

kampena mūrdhnaḥ Śata-patra-yoniṃ vācā Hariṃ Vṛtra-haṇaṃ smitena
āloka-mātreṇa surān aśeṣān saṃbhāvayāmāsa yathā-pradhānam

(7.46)

Respecting hierarchy he greeted Brahmā with a nod of the head, Viṣṇu with a spoken word, Indra with a smile, and all the other gods just with a look.

The whole thing is examplary. Śiva shows by his behaviour the conduct of human beings. Even though he is the Lord of the three worlds, he bows down to his father-in-law to be.

Like the incarnation of *brahmacarya*, he is here the incarnation of *gārhasthya*; he is young and more handsome than the god of love himself who was ashamed of his own beauty when he saw Śiva. (7.67)

This householder is also endowed with *artha*, the riches of the world. Not only has he changed his attributes to rich beautiful garments and ornaments, he has also received rich presents, the Sun has given him an umbrella made by Tvastṛ; Gangā and Yamunā serve him as maids, swaying chowries (7, 42); even the bull he rides has small gold bells (7.49). The description of the wedding reveals the picture of the three objects of life. The expression

of *artha* in its aspects of richness, royal splendour, festivities is sumptuously presented to the reader.

The expression of *kāma* too is evident when we read :

romodgamaḥ prādurabhūd Umāyāḥ svinnāṅguliḥ Puṃgava-ketur āsīt
vṛttis tayoḥ pāṇi-samāgamena samaṃ vibhakteva Mano-bhavasya
(7.77)

When their hands met a thrill passed through Pārvatī's body, and Śiva's finger became wet with sweat : thus, it seemed that both of them shared equally the effect of love.

This love is sanctified by *dharma* ; marriage which is a holy sacrament unites the bride and the bridegroom so that they may follow together the path of *dharma, dharma-caryā* (7, 83).

The entire wedding-scene is painted with the utmost care for significant details which make of Śiva a real embodied bridegroom. All these aspects, so graphically described by thc poet, present to us a godhead, not in some far-off Heaven or in the mythical Kailāsa, but in this world of our senses, of our human aspirations and desires, of social and religious laws. Here is a Godhead who has become an exemplary Man.

All these are indeed worldly actions of the incarnate Divine for the upholding of *dharma, dharma-saṃsthāpanārthāya*—yet this is not all. There is still the final goal. These are high social and individual goals, no doubt, but there is something more; the self-giving of the human to the love of the Divine, and the union through love. This union implies also a surpassing of all human laws and modes of action. And this achieved, God will lead Man until Man becomes one with his divine nature, *mad-bhāvam āgatāḥ*. Kālidāsa shows this aspect too with great concreteness in the Book 8 ; there is a gradual surpassing of the three earthly goals in order to arrive finally to the mystic marriage. This merits a separate chapter because of its complexity and the wealth of suggestions. However we shall have to say a few words about the relation between the incarnate god, and the human being.

Pārvatī is here the human disciple, the seeker, who represents the highest ideals of the people, although she herself is not perfect ; she is human with human imperfections. The *avatāra* shows by examples, teaches by words of mouth. Even in his humanness his divine perfection is alwaps there, without darkness, weakness or ignorance, whereas the disciple is by his very nature limited in knowledge, has weaknesses of the ordinary humanity. The disciple has to lift his whole nature towards the divine heights.

Pārvatī is therefore not shown as a perfect being; she has limitations which she must overcome in order to reach her spiritual perfection. The Gītā says, *bhaktyā (...) yoga-balena caiva* (VIII. 10), "with love and the power of Yoga". In Pārvatī we find both these : love, *bhakti* is *preman*, though at first it was *kāma*; and *tapas* (Book 5) is the spiritual discipline, effort, *yoga*, which transforms *kāma* into *preman* and makes the union possible.

And when one is purified by *yoga*, *tapas*, and has the true *bhakti*, true love, *preman*, then the true relation with god is established. Arjuna says to Kṛṣṇa :

piteva putrasya sakheva sakhyuḥ priyaḥ priyāyārhasi deva soḍhum
(Gītā. XI, 44)

You should bear with me, O God, as a father with his son, as a friend with his friend, as a lover with his beloved.

In Kālidāsa it is the relation of the Lover with the Beloved, like Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā. And when this relation is fully established God himself leads the human soul towards its spiritual goal.

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1. Sri Aurobindo, *The Foundation of Indian Culture*, p. 300.
2. Sukumar Sen, *Bāṅlā Sāhityer Itihās*, III, p. 17.
3. V. Raghavan, *Ṛtu in Sanskrit Literature*, p. 56.
4. *yoṣito vana-devatāḥ*.
5. V. Raghavan, *Ṛtu in Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 68-9.
6. *Ibid*. p. 68.
7. Sri Aurobindo, "Involution and Evolution", p. 236.
8. V. Raghavan, *Ṛtu in Sanskrit Literature*, p. 69.
9. *tayoḥ saukumāryād ity arthaḥ*.
10. Sri Aurobindo, *Isha Upanishad*, p. 71.
11. S. Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upaniṣads*, p. 567.
12. See, J. N. Banerjee, *Paurānic and Tāntric Religion*, pp. 45-6.
13. See, J. Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, II. pp. 70, 197; J. N. Banerjee, *Pañcopāsanā* pp. 148-9, 153.
14. For the origin and development of Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism see J. N. Banerjee, *Pañcopāsanā*; J. Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens*, R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*.
15. J. N. Banerjee, *Pañcopāsanā*, p. 120.

16. S. K. De, "The Mahābhārata", p. 105.
17. R. Sarkar, *Gītagovinda*, pp. 9-16.
18. In this connectiod we may mention a work, *Pārvatipariṇaya*, perhaps of the 15th century, but wrongly attributed to Bāṇa. Its merits are however very limited.
19. Sri Aurobindo, *Essays on the Gītā*, pp. 139-40.
20. Manu says that an ascetic should be *vṛkṣa-mūla-niketanaḥ*. (VI, 26).
21. Quoted earlier (Chap. III).
22. Not all the verses have the same concreteness, for example the verse (3.50) possesses hardly any poetic value when taken out of the context, independently. Neverthe-less within the given context it intensifies the total impression.
23. *Manu*, II.

CHAPTER VII
SURFACE AND SYMBOL

The dualities, oppositions, contradictions which we have seen in the previous chapters permeate the very language-structure of the poem. The descriptions and the metaphors share this dualism, are directed and patternized under its all-pervading influence. But this dualism is not an absolute opposition. The opposites are harmonized in a higher synthesis and are finally linked together by an all-embracing principle.

The very first verse characterizes this pattern and sets the tone, so to say, of the whole poem. Himālaya, says the poet, "stands like the earth's measuring rod, spanning the eastern and the western oceans", *pūrvāparau toya-nidhī vagāhya sthitaḥ pṛthivyā iva māna-daṇḍa* (1.1). In this verse *pūrva* and *apara*, east and west, point to the extremes of the earth, two opposite points. But these opposites which seem unbridgeable at the first glance are however connected by the mountain range. This dialectic pattern recurs in various forms within the poem. We may almost say that it is this which creates, at first, the tension between extremes like eroticism and asceticism, plenty and destitution etc. but later brings them together within an all-comprehensive synthesis.

In the domain of concepts, *tattva*, we have sorted out some of these dialectical patterns. We notice them in the poetic structure too. With two examples, one from the descriptive field, the other from the metaphorical, we shall show the penetrating power of this process.

(i) *Seasons*

When we consider the treatment of seasons in Kālidāsa we find, on the one end, the season of love and new-creation, spring, and on the other, the seasons of austerity and destruction, summer and winter. Spring, *vasanta*, has always been associated with sweetness and delight, with happy life. In Vedic literature it is said that spring comes along with the *Vasu*, gods of

happiness. But summer, *grīṣma*, comes with the Rudra, gods of destruction and terror who strike the earth with fiery lustre, the Marut, the wind-gods, sons of Rudra, also powers of destruction, preside over winter.

Let us first consider *vasanta*. Pārvatī's childhood and youth are described with images borrowed from spring : Himālaya had other children yet his eyes were never satiated with looking at Pārvatī : this attachment to her is compared with the special yearning of the bees for the mango-blossoms, although many other flowers bloom in spring :

ananta-puṣpasya Madhor hi cūte dvirepha-mālā sa-viśeṣa-saṃgā (1.27)

Even though countless flowers bloom in spring, bees are particuiarly attached to the mango-blossoms.

Pārvatī's association with *vasanta* is made evident. But *Vasanta* personified is the friend of Desire, Kāma, who is later depicted as *sahacara-Madhu-hasta-nyasta-cūtāṅkurāstraḥ* (2.64), "he who laid the arrow of mango-buds in the hands of his companion Vasanta." Pārvatī, we have noted, is also an arrow of Kāma, different from the flowery ones, *Kāmasya puṣpa-vyatiriktam astram* (1.31). She replaces the flower-arrows : this implies that though strictly speaking she is not a flower yet metaphorically she is. The beauty of her body blooms like the lotus, *aravinda*, one of Kāma's flowers her ; arms are tender like the *śiriṣa*-flowers (1.41) ; her eyes like blue lotuses, *nilotpala* (1.46) ; her voice is sweeter than the song of the cuckoo, the sweet-voiced messenger of spring. All that is beautiful and gay has found expression in her body.

We have to note here that both Vasanta and Pārvatī, who is metaphorically related to Vasanta, have got a special value and function as helpers of Kāma.

However we are at present not concerned with Pārvatī as Pārvatī, but only as an expression of spring, whose full manifestation we see in the forest where Śiva sits plunged in deep meditation. The place is called *sthānv-āśrama*, the hermitage of *sthānu*, the god who is unmoving like a tree-trunk.

taṣmin vane saṃyaminām munīnām tapaḥ-samādheḥ pratikūla-vartī
saṃkalpa-yoner abhimāna-bhūtam ātmānam ādhāya Madhur jajṛmbhe (3.24)

In that wood Vasanta an obstacle to the mystical concentration of the self-restrained hermits, manifested himself everywhere in the form which was the pride of Kāma,

The verb *jajṛmbhe* denotes the all-pervasiveness of spring. Kālidāsa has not spoken earlier of any season in the wood. But this verb, *jṛmbh*—, of which the primary meaning is "to yawn" suggests clearly that before the coming of spring all nature was asleep, all movements were in abeyance; life itself stood still. It was a season of destitution propitious to austerities. It was winter, as we learn later when the poet speaks of the passing away of winter, *hima-vyapāya* (3.33).

This verse also gives the characteristic traits of Vasanta : an obstacle to the pursuit of spiritual and yogic practices, *tapaḥ-samādheḥ pratikūla-vartī*. And he is also the expression of Kāma's arrogance, *abhimāna-bhūta*. Then follows a brilliant picture of love and life; there is no privation, no immobility; only a wonderful flux of colour, sound, perfume. But it is love that is instinctive, natural, erotic; there is no restraint anywere, no self-mastery, *saṃyama* (3.24). The whole season wakes up the earth in order to make her serve the primal Desire, Kāma :

sadyaḥ pravālodgama-cāru-patre nīte samāptiṃ nava-cūta-bāṇe
niveśayāmāsa Madhur dvi-rephān nāmākṣarāṇīva Mano-bhavasya
(3.27)

No sooner had Vasanta made the arrow of young mango-blossoms with lovely new leaves for feathers than he placed on it the bees as letters of Kāma's name.

In the verses which describe spring the images are predominantly erotic. This makes the contrast with the self-restrained ascetics all the more noticeable. Vasanta himself is the lover of the forest (3.29). And this awakening, and the union of the vernal beauty with the earth, increase in the heart of all nature, the sense of separation, and from that time the poignant yearning for union.

The antelopes intoxicated by passion run against the wind as if following the smell of the female antelopes (3.31); the song of the cuckoo is the song of union, of reconciliation between lovers (3.32). The season of love has arrived with all its power of beauty, to prepare the ground for love, for love's union; it is the mating time in nature. Every flower is an erotic sign : *aśoka* and its association with the feet of beautiful ladies; mango-blossom with Kāma's arrows; *palāśa* with nail-marks of the love-game. There is only one flower which, in spite of being extremely beautiful, has no erotic association. It is the *karṇikāra* :

varṇa-prakarṣe sati karṇikāraṃ dunoti nirgandhatayā sma cetaḥ
prāyeṇa sāmagrya-vidhau guṇānāṃ parāṅ-mukhī viśva-sṛjaḥ pravṛttiḥ
(3.28)

Although the *karṇikāra* has a superb colour yet it saddened the heart because it had no smell. Often the Creator refuses to heap up all the qualities together.

When we read the effect of spring in the forest with the erotic description, this verse seems to be out of place; it seems to give a discordant note; it seems irrelevant. Everywhere else there is passion and pleasure, here sadness, *dunoti cetaḥ*, a note of dissatisfaction, of imperfection. Kālidāsa who has said earlier : *eko hi doṣa guṇa-saṃnipāte nimajjatīndoḥ kiraṇeṣv evāṅkaḥ* (1.3), "for, one single defect gets lost in the abundance of qualities like the moon's spot in the midst of its rays", puts a special emphasis on the imperfection. Why ? Kālidāsa does not write anything which does not form an integral part of the poetic pattern; he will not disturb the harmony of the whole only to put in a witty remark. To me it seems, therefore, that Kālidāsa has some hidden intention in introducing this apparent discord. He means to say that this beauty of spring with all its erotic paraphernalia is not all; even within this there is something else that "saddens", *dunoti*, the heart enamoured of this outward show. There is also an undertone in the words *karṇikāra* and *nirgandhatā*. The *karṇikāra* is a flower dear to Śiva.[2] And Śiva is still in deep meditation unmoved by this disturbance by the vernal awakening. The *karṇikāra* which has no smell becomes a fit sign of Śiva, unmoved, undisturbed though present with all his splendour, and who by his very presence saddens the heart. Whose heart ? Vasanta's heart; Kāma's heart; hearts of all who are caught in the tremendous outward show which will not last for ever. There is here, I believe a dramatic irony hinting at the failure of the whole enterprise.

Nevertheless, as long as the show continues it is brilliantly presented. Winter has gone; untimely spring has succeeded even in perturbing the minds of the ascetics who were absorbed in meditation in the forest of *Sthāṇu* (3.34).

The preparation which spring has made gets its first fulfilment when Kāma and Rati enter the forest. Desire finds its consummation in the union of the pairs, to give only two examples, which are also high water-marks of Kālidāsian poetry with all its concentrated tangible sensuousness :

madhu dvi-rephaḥ kusumaika-pātre papau priyāṃ svam anuvartamānaḥ
śṛṅgeṇa ca sparśa-nimīlitākṣīṃ mṛgīm akaṇḍūyata kṛṣṇasāraḥ (3.36)

> The he-bee following its dear mate drank honey from the same flower-goblet; and with its horns the black antelope scratched the she-antelope which closed its eyes for the pleasure of the touch.

And another from the vegetable world :

> paryāpta puṣpa-stabaka-stanābhyaḥ sphurat-pravāloṣṭha-mano-harābhyaḥ
> latā-vadhūbhyas taravo' py avāpur vinamra-śākhā-bhuja-bandhanāni (3.39)

> The trees too were embraced by their creeper-brides of whom the bent branches were the arms, the rich flower-clusters the breasts and who looked enchanting with their quivering lips of new leaves.

But however great be the power of Vasanta and Kāma, Śiva remains unperturbed (3.40). And Nandin, the faithful servant of Śiva, with one gesture re-establishes the season of austerity, and the great show vanishes in the thin air like an unsubstantial pageant :

> niṣkampa-vṛkṣaṃ nibhṛta-dvi-rephaṃ mukāṇḍajaṃ śānta-mṛga-pracāram
> tac-chāsanāt kānanam eva sarvaṃ citrārpitārambham ivāvatasthe (3.42)

> At his bidding the entire woodland became, as it were, a scene caught in a painting: trees motionless, bees in hiding, birds silent and beasts unroving.

This is the first failure of spring, which appeared as the season of life, love, flux. But there is still Pārvatī, with her beauty and youth, an image of spring. Indeed when all the efforts of Kāma and Vasanta seem to be in vain, she appears :

> aśoka-nirbhartsita-padmarāgam akṛṣṭa-hema-dhyuti-karṇikāram
> muktā-kalāpī-kṛta-sindhuvāraṃ vasanta-puṣpābharaṇaṃ vahanti (3.53)

> ...wearing the flower-ornaments of spring : *aśoka* which put rubies to shame, *karṇikāra* which bore the glitter of gold, *sindhuvāra* which was like a necklace of pearl.

She is like a creeper; her breasts are cluster of flowers; she wears all the flowers of spring. When she arrives, Śiva opens his eyes; Pārvatī's friends scatter flowers which they culled after the passing of the winter, *śiśiratyayasya*

...*puspoccayah* (3.61). And then Pārvatī herself bows down before the Lord :

> Umāpi nīlālaka-madhya-śobhi visraṃsayanti nava-karṇikāram
> cakāra karṇa-cyuta-pallavena mūrdhnā praṇāmaṃ Vṛṣabha-dhvajāya (3.62)

When in salutation to Śiva Pārvatī bowed her head, the flower-buds she wore in the ears fell down and the fresh *karṇikāra* shining in her dark tresses got loosened.

This is again a suggestive verse. Pārvatī wears various spring-flowers, but the *karṇikāra* she wears on her head. We have seen the special significance that Kālidāsa has attached to this flower dear to Śiva. Here too the same emphasis is laid on this flower. When she bows down the *karṇikāra* loosened from her hair drop at Śiva's feet. This suggests the offering of that which, in spring, is dear to Śiva, not all the other flowers which are weapons of Kāma, and ephemeral creations of Vasanta. This dropping of the *karṇikāra* suggests further that the offering is not conscious yet; Pārvatī has not intentionally offered them : it is only the sign, the prefiguration of what is to come.

Pārvatī is not yet ready; she is still the instrument of Kāma, and her body the expression of Vasanta. And therefore we find in this scene the destruction of Kāma, the disappointment and shame of Pārvatī. What spring began as the manifestation of a new life, a new creation, ended in disaster and death.

Kāma is dead, but not Vasanta. The seasons will return; there will be every year a new spring, but it can never again have the same meaning without the presence of Kāma who was the soul of spring, who gave meaning to spring; although this meaning was on the level of the body, of physical love, of physical beauty. The universal desire which expressed itself in spring was no more; spring would henceforth be only a soulless beauty, dead beauty; the flowers, the bees, the cuckoo, the mango-blossoms will come and go in vain.

This is precisely what Rati says addressing her dead husband :

> haritāruṇa-cāru-bandhanaḥ kala-puṃs-kokila-śabda-sūcitaḥ
> vada saṃprati kasyā bāṇatām nava-cūta-prasavo gamiṣyati (4.14)

> ali-paṅktir anekaśas tvayā guṇa-kṛtye dhanuṣo niyojitā
> virutaiḥ karuṇa-svanair iyaṃ guru-śokām anuroditīva mām (4.15)

Say, for whose arrows will the new mango-blossoms now serve–blossoms of which the lovely stems are reddish-green and which make the he-cuckoos sing sweetly.

The swarm of bees, with which you made many times your bowstring, seem with their sad-toned humming to weep with me the grief of whom is great.

The failure of spring as the season of erotic love is complete, but spring is not dead, and we are told that Kāma, the soul of spring, will also be ressucitated when Śiva and Pārvatī will be married. We shall later see that the nature of spring will then be different; it will be the term of synthesis between the season of erotic love and the seasons of austerities.

We see next Pārvatī in *tapas*. The seasons form a significant background of her spiritual quest, as in the earlier passages a link was seen between her and the seasons, here too (in Book 5) we find a certain link, with a different suggestiveness, though. "This is", says Raghavan, "another Pārvatī, not the beauty of spring taken shape..."[3] This statement is in a way true; true only when spring is seen as the season of outward physical beauty, of sensuousness and unregenerated natural emotions; that is to say, spring as depicted previously. But even in the ascetic Pārvatī not all the beauty of spring has vanished; her youth, her joy her physical beauty are all present, but they are veiled, or only half-veiled, not lost, for they will again manifest with a new significance. The idea of veil and withdrawal, not loss, is expressed by Kālidāsa in the following verse :

yatha prasiddhair madhuraṃ śiro-ruhair jaṭābhir apy evam abhūt tad–ānanam
na ṣaṭ-pada-śreṇibhir eva paṅkajaṃ sa-śaivālāsaṅgam api prakāśate (5.9)

With the matted hair her face kept the same sweetness as when her hair used to be adorned : a lotus does not grow lovely only with rows of bees but also in contact with moss.

The lines suggest that nothing is lost, the face is as sweet as ever; the hair too is the same, but it has changed its aspect. The beauty is there all right, but it is somewhat covered by the matted hair. The opposition between *prasiddha śiro-ruha* and *jaṭā* on the descriptive side, and between *ṣaṭpada-śreṇi* and *śaivāla* on the side of metaphors, also indicate the nature of change : change from pleasure, luxury sensuousness, warmth, to hardship, austerity and coldness.

That Pārvatī is still the personification of spring, but of a spring which will be transformed, is again indicated by Kālidāsa when he compares her body with a golden lotus—*vapuḥ kāñcana-padma-nirmitam* (5.19). The lotus-metaphor which is conventional gets a special value in the depiction of Pārvatī. The *kāñcana-padma*, and two verses further *kamala-śrī*, (5.21) the splendour of the lotus that her face gets when touched by the rays of the summer sun, are very different in nature, though not in essence, from the *aravinda* (1.32) which was a weapon of Kāma.

The seasons of *tapas* complete this transformation. There is a gradation there, from summer to winter, though all the seasons are not mentioned. Winter lies at the extreme opposite of spring, as the symbol of destruction of all the sensuousness and outward beauty. Kālidāsa, following Manu, does not mention all the seasons in relation to *tapas*. Manu says :

grīṣme pañca-tapās tu syād varṣāsv abhrāvakāśikaḥ
ārdra-vāsās tu hemante kramaśo vardhayaṃs tapaḥ (VI. 23)

Gradually increasing the hardship of *tapas* he (the ascetic) should, in summer keep five fires burning around him ; in the rainy season remain under the open sky ; in winter wear wet clothes.

However he follows strictly Manu's prescription in his description of Pārvatī's *tapas*. There is a gradual intensification of the austerities, reaching the climax in *hemanta*, winter. In summer she suffers the heat not only of the sun but of four fires burning around her ; in the Rains she is drenched by the downpour. Then comes the severest season of cold wind and snow, and season also of separation :

nināya sātyanta-himotkirānilāḥ sahasya-rātrīr uda-vāsa-tatparā
parasparākrandini cakravākayoḥ puro viyukte mithune kṛpāvatī

(5.26)

Standing in water with unflinching determination she passed the winter-nights when the wind scattered heaps of snow around ; she took great pity on the pair of *cakravāka*-birds before her, separated from each other by the water and weeping for each other.

In the description of spring the poet has shown with the utmost concreteness the love-sport of the pairs; but here he evokes the sense of utter desolation, and the sense of separation,—not now the pair of bees drinking honey from the same flower-cup, the antelope scratching its mate, the kissing of the *kiṃpuruṣa*-couples, the embrace of the tree and the creeper,—an extreme desolation, snow and cold wind ; and the only living creatures are the *cakra-*

vāka-pair separated from each other, bewailing their sorrow. And Pārvatī also is separated from the Lover, but she is not weeping, she is only compassionate, *kṛpāvatī*, towards the birds, for she has now reached a stage beyond that love which makes separation unbearable. In fact she has already gone beyond the paradox of ordinary spring and winter, and has attained a higher stage, a higher spring. Again the lotus-symbol makes powerfully evident this surpassing :

mukhena sā padma-su-gandhinā niśi pravepamānādhara-patra-śobhinā
tuṣāra-vṛṣṭi-kṣata-padma-saṃpadāṃ saroja-saṃdhānam ivākarod apām
(5.27)

The water had lost its wealth of lotuses due to snow-fall ; at night, she seemed to provide it again with a lotus : her face which smelled like the lotus lovely with the trembling petals which were her lips.

The contradiction is here reconciled; winter has destroyed the lotuses, beauty and wealth of Nature, symbol of love and spring ; it seems a total destruction. But Pārvatī whom we have earlier seen as the symbol of spring has undergone a total transformation of her nature ; she is still the lotus, still the symbol of spring but of a spring which is purified, and which now revives also the beauty of nature. She replaces the ephemeral lotuses by her beauty which is now the symbol of a higher spring, a new-life and a new youth, a spiritual revival.

Kālidāsa more than suggests this synthesis of the opposites, spring and winter, when he compares Pārvatī with the mango-branch, and Śiva with Vasanta. We have seen Śiva, the ascetic and his association with winter. And now Pārvatī has reached that winter of *tapas*. But Kālidāsa does not make the union of Śiva and Pārvatī in that bare world of cold and snow, of death and annihilation. For beyond spring and winter, he sees another spring, the spring of eternal and divine love, of joy and undying beauty.

In the beginning of Book 6, we fiind Śiva, Pārvatī and Pārvatī's friend. Śiva has just said that Pārvatī has bought Śiva by her *tapas*. And Pārvatī gives, through her friend, the message to Śiva that Himālaya, her father should be approached for the arrangement of their wedding. The poet then continues :

taya vyāhṛta-saṃdeśā sā babhau nibhṛta priye
cūta-yaṣṭir ivābhyāse madhau para-bhṛtonmukhī (6.2)

She sent her message to the beloved through her friend and became silent, like a mango-branch which is silent and speaks to spring who is close by through the voice of the she-cuckoo.

Here we find a metaphorical identification of Śiva with spring and Pārvatī, as well as her friend, to two expressions of that spring, the mango-branch and the she-cuckoo. The synthesis is completely achieved.

(ii) *Day and Night*

To the two antithetical modes of human experience, logical and aesthetic, correspond two types of semiotic codes. The one deals with the objective perception of the outer world, the elements of which, are organized by Reason into a coherent system. The other deals with the intimate feelings which move man when he experiences beauty and truth. In this case the elements of his experience cannot be organized into a rational system; the signs or objects of experience are less conventional than logical signs; they do not mean something abstract outside of themselves, they carry within themselves their own meaning "porteurs de leur propre signification".[4] Poetry or poetic experience expresses itself with the help of this second kind of signs, which are language-signs.

These signs, in contradiction to logical signs, are "iconic and analogical", they do not make statements but reveal the poet's experience in a concrete form. For, signs which are vague, insignificant, commonplace while standing apart, acquire within a poetic text a new significance because of their participation in a coherent structure.

These contentions are not new, though modern critics are rediscovering them in a somewhat different context. Using the terminology of the Indian *alaṃkārika*, we can say that the poetic utterance, *varṇana*, which expresses an aesthetic experience, *darśana*, is made possible by means of language-signs, *śabda*. Bhartṛhari says, *sarvaṃ śabdena bhāsate* (Vākyapadīya, 1.123); and Tarapada Chakravarty commenting on him, writes : ". .a reality which is not associated with an articulate verbal form, does not form the content of our thought."[5] But the question remains : How do the language-signs reveal the *darśana* of the poet ?

Ānandavardhana tries to give an answer to this question. Poetry is evocation, suggestion *dhvani*, not statement. The *Dhvanivādin* however dealt with stray verses and tried to find out within the linguistic structure of a verse the hidden experience; they never dealt with a whole *kāvya*. But when we take into consideration a longer poem we find there too words within a certain structure acquiring a special significance or *dhvani*, these reveal concretely some significant aspects of the poetic vision,

In this section we shall try to see how the words signifying "night", in their relation to those signifying "day", express the fundamental vision of KS : destruction of *kāma* and the union of Śiva and Pārvatī, by which Kāma is reborn.

"Night" and "day" form a simple structure. We could certainly study the theme of "night" or the theme of "day" separately, as often critics have done with significant images and metaphors of great poets. But, says Pierre Guiraud, "derrière ce qu'on traitait jusqu'ici comme des signes isolés on reconnaît aujourd'hui l'existence de systèmes d'oppositions d'où ces signes tirent leur signification".[6] We too have found it more rewarding to take into consideration this system which seems at first sight to be a system of opposites.

We have a clear indication of this system within the poem itself. The gods in their praise to Brahmā say :

sva-kāla-parimāṇena vyasta-rātriṃ-divasya te (2.8)

...of you who have separated night and day by the measure of your own time...

"Night" and "day" are not absolute opposites, neither do they exclude one another. In fact when we consider the words meaning "day", *divasa*, *dina*, *divā*, *ahan*, we find that they contain often the period of time which we call night. These words have therefore a greater temporal extension than "night". On the other hand what they gain in extension they lose in intensity. *Rātri*, *rajanī*, *nakta*, *niśi*, *pradoṣa*, *kṣapā*, *vibhāvarī*, *triyāmā*, *yāminī*, *śarvarī*, *niśitha*, though, in the sense of temporal expanse, cover a shorter period of time than "divasa" etc., yet they are metaphorically more significant. This fact is justified by the more frequent use of these words and also the manner in which they are used.

The words "night" and "day" may be thought to be opposite in respect to light and darkness. But it is not so. Though we associate *divasa*, *divā* with light, yet *rātri* etc. are not devoid of light ; the day excludes darkness— Kālidāsa speaks of the darkness afraid of the day taking shelter in the caves of Himālaya :

divākarād rakṣati yo guhāsu līnaṃ divā-bhītam ivāndhakāram (1.12)

he (Himālaya) who, in his caves, protects from the sun (=the maker of light) the darkness which clings to him in fear, as it were, of the day—

But the night does not exclude light; the images of stars, moon and lamps are abundant in KS. Because of this inclusion of light,—the significant element which makes *divasa*—, "night" becomes poetically more significant. We see that the separation of "night" and "day" *rātri*, *divā* by Brahma is not absolute; there exists therefore the possibility of an interplay between the two. It is this interplay which reveals their meaning within the general body of the poem.

Let us consider the description of the birth and growth of Pārvatī. Describing her mother Menā, after Pārvatī's birth, Kālidāsa writes :

tayā duhitrā sutarāṃ savitrī sphurat-prabhā-maṇḍalayā cakāse (1.24)

...she who gave her birth shone brilliantly with the splendour of the daughter who was surrounded by a glittering effulgence.

This line makes at once the association of Pārvatī with light; the next verse shows that this light is born out of the night :

dine dine sā parivardhamānā labdhodayā candramasīva lekhā (1.25)

...she who was like the newly-risen crescent of the moon grew day by day.

Again Kālidāsa compares her with a lustrous flame, *prabhāmahatī śikhā* (1.28), which supports and strengthens the same significance.

If we now look at Śiva we can discover also some interesting indications.

sa hi devaḥ paraṃ jyotis tamaḥ-pāre vyavasthitam (2.58)

...he indeed is God; the supreme light, fixed beyond darkness.

The supreme light beyond darkness,—this light is different from the manifested light, the light which is on this side of darkness; for the lustre shed by Śiva's crescent moon is more luminous than day; when the moon-crested God arrives at Himālaya's capital,—although it is day-time and the palace-tops glitter in the light—, he makes them twice as luminous by shedding moonlight on them :

prāsāda-śṛṅgāṇi divāpi kurvañ jyotsnābhiṣeka-dviguṇa-dyutīni (7.63)

When we take these two things together we find on the one hand the association of Pārvatī with the light born out of the night, on the other, of Śiva with the unmanifested light beyond darkness. Here we should also notice that the expression *divāpi* as one of the terms of the antithesis day/night is there only to give value to the image of night. In fact the element

which gives value to "day", viz. "light", has been assimilated by "night"; it is within the night that we have the twofold light, Pārvatī on this side, Śiva on the other.

We shall now try to see how these two lights grow and finally are united in the symbolism of the night. When we read the book of Pārvatī's *tapas* we find a signifiant verse :

> śilāśayāṃ tam aniketa-vāsinīṃ nirantarāsv antara-vāta-vṛṣṭisu
> vyalokayann unmiṣitais taḍin-mayair mahā-tapaḥ-sākṣya iva sthitāḥ
> kṣapāḥ (5.25)

> . . . she lived outside her home, slept on a stony bed in unceasing wind and rain while nights stood like witnesses of her great tapas looking at her with open eyes full of lightning.

Here we have first to notice that the witness of Pārvatī's *tapas* is the night; it is in the night that she purifies herself in order to become Śiva's bride. But then what are night's lightning-glances ? In order to grasp the implication of this metaphor we have to refer back to Śiva, the Supreme Light beyond darkness. Then it will not be far-fetched to say that the witness is nothing but this Supreme Light itself, breaking through the night; it is Śiva presiding over and following the progress of Pārvatī's *tapas*.

In the same book we find some more important implications of "night". Śiva, as the ***brahmacārin***, asks Pārvatī :

> kim ity apāsyābharaṇāni yauvane dhṛtaṃ tvayā vārdhakya-śobhi
> valkalam

> vada pradoṣe sphuṭa-candra-tārakā vibhāvarī yady aruṇāya kalpate
> (5.44)

> Why have you in this early youth abandoned your ornaments to put on garments of bark fit only for old age ? Say, does the night bursting with the moon and stars, long in its early hours for the dawn ?

Here Pārvatī is compared to ***vibhāvarī***, ***yauvana*** to ***pradoṣa***, ***vārdhakya*** to ***aruṇa***. This shows that "night" gets a greater value than "day". Night is the stronger and the more significant term. The metaphor of the starry and moonlit night, ***sphuṭa-candra-tārakā vibhāvarī***, also indicates that Pārvatī is now prepared for the great union. A foretaste of this union is again given in the framework af the night. Her friend says about Pārvatī :

tri-bhāga-śeṣāsu niśāsu ca kṣaṇaṃ nimīlya netre sahasā vyabudhyata
kva Nīlakaṇṭha vrajasīty a-lakṣya-vāg a-satya-kaṇṭhārpita-bāhu-bandhanā (5.57)

When only the third part of the night remained, she would close her eyes for a moment but wake up at once uttering indistinctly, "Where do you go, O Nīlakaṇṭha ?" and throw her arms round a non-existent neck.

This leads us to the final aspect of the night : night as the time of union ; the light which is on this side of night has grown through *tapas* and has become a luminous night, *sphuṭa-candra-tārakā vibhāvarī*. That which was earthly desire has deepened into its more mysterious counterpart.

There are many passages in KS where Kālidāsa emphasizes the night as the time of union.

atha Madana-vadhūr upaplavāntaṃ vyasana-kṛśā paripālayāṃ babhūva
śaśina iva divātanasya lekhā kiraṇa-parikṣaya-dhūṣarā pradoṣam.
(4.46)

And Kāma's wife, whom misery had worn out, awaited the end of the calamity, just as the crescent of the moon, appearing during the day and pallid through the loss of its rays, awaits the night-fall.

This verse conveys that it is during the daytime that beauty and lustre vanish—at night the lustre returns. Here it is the promise of Rati's union with Kāma, who will be reborn when Śiva and Pārvatī are united. It is a poetic indication of the complete expression of joy and beauty in the night ; in contrast the day, *divā*, is the sign of calamity, *upaplava*.

But it is in Book 8, the book of Pārvatī's love, that the sign of night becomes complex and fully unfolds itself. Here we find two different aspects of the night ; firstly, night as the unmanifest, the absolute negation, the non-existent ; next as the manifestation. It is in this second aspect that Śiva and Pārvatī meet ; where the light that is born on this side and the light that is beyond unite and are fulfilled.

The negative aspect :

nordhvam īkṣaṇa-gatir na cāpy adho nābhito na purato na pṛṣṭataḥ
loka eṣa timirolba-veṣṭito garbha-vāsa iva vartate niśi
śuddham āvilam avasthitaṃ calaṃ vakram ārjava-guṇānvitaṃ ca yat
sarvam eva tamasā samīkṛtam dhiṅ mahatvam asatāṃ hatāntaram
(8.56-7)

The eyes do not go above, not even below, not around, not in front, not behind. This world enveloped by the membrane of darkness seems to be in gestation in the womb of night.

The pure and the impure, the fixed and the moving, the crooked and the straight, have all been indeed levelled by darkness. Fie upon the greatness of unreal things which destroys all differences.

The images of the membrane of darkness and the womb make it clear that this night is the night before creation. That Kālidāsa is not in sympathy with this undifferentiated state is evident from the word "*dhik*" (fie !). Within the darkness the light manifests itself. And Śiva says that this night is like Pārvatī herself, and he himself is like the moon :

mandārāntarita-mūrtinā niśā lakṣyate śaśa-bhṛtā sa-tārakā
tvaṃ mayā priya-sakhi-samāgatā śroṣyateva vacanāni pṛṣṭataḥ (8.59)

This starry night with the moon's form hidden behind the Mandāra-mountain, appears to me like you surrounded by your dear friends, and I listening to your words from behind.

The moon hidden behind the Mandāra-mountain echoes the idea of the Supreme Light behind darkness. But for the union the Supreme Light, in this case the moon, has to appear from behind the mountain. The following verse with a complex richness of significance speaks of this manifestation.

ruddha-nirgamanam ā dina-kṣayāt pūrva-dṛṣṭa-tanu-candrikā-smitam
etad udgirati rātri-coditā dig rahasyam iva candra-maṇḍalam (8.60)

The sky, urged by the night, reveals the moon as if he was a mystery, the moon who could not appear fully before the day's end and whose moonlight-smile upto that moment looked pale.

In this we have several important ideas : the moon is pale during the day; the day hides more than it reveals; and it is only when the daylight diminishes that the moon can rise in its full splendour; the quarter of the sky, *diś*, which held back the moon releases it when urged by the night, *rātri-coditā*—this suggests the manifestation of Śiva made possible by Pārvatī's *tapas*; and finally, the moon is a mystery, *rahasya*. The association of the moon with Śiva which is a common-place, has acquired a new dimension.

The image of night gets a definite contour; it is no more the symbol of darkness; in fact darkness has taken shelter in shallow places, *nimna-saṃśraya-paraṃ niśā-tamaḥ* (8.66).

What remains is light; and in a later verse when the image of marriage is evoked we find that it is the marriage between two luminous attributes of night. Śiva tells Pārvatī :

eṣa cāru-mukhi yoga-tārayā yujyate tarala-bimbayā śaśī
sādhvasād upagata-prakampayā kanyayeva nava-dīkṣayā varaḥ (8.73)

O lovely-faced One, behold, the moon and the brightest star with a flickering halo, are united, like a bridegroom with his newly-wedded bride trembling in fear.

Such is the significance of night. In this union the common day vanishes; there remains only the eternal night of union :

sama-divasa niśīthaṃ saṃginas tatra Śambhoḥ
śatam agamat ṛtunāṃ sārdham ekā niśeva (8.91)

Making no difference between day and night Śiva, in love's union passed there hundred and fifty seasons as if it were just one *night*.

In this final verse of KS we find that the antithesis of ordinary day and night vanishes, *sama-divasa-niśitham*, and there is a synthesis and a fulfilment in an eternal night which is full of light and bliss.

In conclusion we may note in short that "night" and "day" and some other terms related to them, form within KS a significant structure. We have tried to analyse this structuxe which suggests by creating a complex system of *dhvani*, the poetic vision that Kālidāsa has tried to express.

REFERENCES

1. *Taitt. Ār.* I. 3-4. See V. Raghavan, *Ṛtu in Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 7-9.
2. *Karṇikāra-priya* is an epithet of Śiva, V. S. Apte, *The Practical Sanskrit English Dictionary*.
3. V. Raghavan, *Ṛtu in Sanskrit Literature*, p. 69.
4. Pierre Guiraud, *La Semiotique*, 11.
5. Tarapada Chakravarty, *Indian Aesthetics and Science of Language*, p. 5.
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CHAPTER VIII

THE MYSTIC MARRIAGE : UNION OF ŚIVA AND PĀRVATĪ

We shall now consider the union of Śiva and Pārvatī which is the central theme of the poem. Kālidāsa expresses this union in various ways, some of which we have already seen. But the most potent, concrete, realistic, and at the same time, most suggestive of the poet's utterances are to be found in the erotic descriptions and metaphors.

In the beginning Pārvatī and Śiva seem to stand at two extreme ends; Pārvatī at the end of *kāma*, sensuous and worldly; Śiva at the end of quietude, *samādhi*, the negation of desires. In this chapter we shall see how these extremes meet.

Kālidāsa introduces Śiva as the personification of quiescence, of withdrawal from all worldly involvement. Śiva sits in meditation completely united with the Absolute, *brahmaṇi yogitātmā* (3.15). There is no modification, no disturbance in him. He has controlled all the outgoing senses which lead to *pravṛtti*, involvement, attachment to the world and worldly desires :

mano nava-dvāra-niṣiddha-vṛtti hṛdi vyavasthāpya samādhi-vaśyam
yam akṣaraṃ kṣetra-vido vidus tam ātmānam ātmany avolokayantam
(3.50)

With his mind fixed in the heart-centre—the mind the passage of which through the nine doors was barred and which was completely subjugated by yogic concentration—he (Śiva) contemplated in himself his own self which the knowers of the Vedic lores know as imperishable.

Epithets like *yatātman* (3.16), *ātmeśvara* (3.40) *saṃyamin* (3.44) *jitendriya* (3.57) also show that Śiva is the ideal ascetic, the supreme yogin. Nothing can disturb him :

ātmeśvarāṇāṃ na hi jātu vignāḥ samādhi-bheda-prabhavo bhavanti
(3.40)

...for, it is true, obstacles have not the power to disturb the yogic concentration of those who are masters of themselves.

Śiva's third eye is of special significance in this context :

kapāla-netrāntara-labdha-mārgair jyotiḥ-prarohair uditaiḥ śirastaḥ
mṛṇāla-sūtrādhika-saukumāryāṃ bālasya lakṣmīṃ glapayantam indoḥ
(3.49)

He overshadowed the splendour of the rays of the young moon,—rays more tender than lotus-fibre—, with light-tendrils which, rising from his head, passed through the (third) eye in his forehead.

In this verse we should notice the description of the luminous rays which rise from his head and pass through the third eye. All the doors of sense-perception are closed, nothing from outside can enter his mind ; yet he does not sit there altogether without any contact with nature. There is a contact; but it is a one-way traffic ; the rays rising from his head, *śirastaḥ*, illumine the world. And these rays are said to be more tender than the rays of the moon. We have the impression of a quiet vastness of the Spirit spreading over the whole world.

We should further note that the description here of Śiva does not express the dynamism of *tapas*, but the calm of *samādhi*. This state is expressed by the rays emanating from Śiva's third eye. There is no question of energy but only of luminosity. This light holds within itself the source of energy, *tapas*. The episode of the burning of the god of Love shows the energizing of this light.

On the other end stands Pārvatī; she is depicted as a weapon of Kāma. Kālidāsa devotes all his art in bringing out her highly sensuous beauty. Pārvatī is Kāma's weapon (1.31) ; her whole body is Kāma's altar, (1.39) ; her arms are chains to bind Śiva (1.41) ; her brows are Kāma's bow (1.47). Even Brahmā says that Śiva has to be drawn out of his meditation by the beauty of Pārvatī, *Umā-rūpeṇa* (2.59). This is the very first stage of Pārvatī's personality. She is a perfect *nāyikā*, the classical heroine : her beauty and grace are irreproachable; every part of her body is perfect ; she is an epitome of world's beauty :

sā nirmitā viśva-sṛjā prayatnād eka-stha-saundarya-didṛkṣayeva
(1.49)

With the desire to contemplate all beauty at one place the Creator of the world fashioned her with great care.

Not only physical beauty but also all arts and learning, which make the *nāyikā* desirable, were hers :

tām...sthiropadeśām upadeśa-kāle prapedire prāktana-janma-vidyāḥ (1.30)

At the time of instruction, the knowledge she received in her past lives, she whose learning remained uneffaced from life to life, came back to her.

This is not Pārvatī's final expresion. There is a long evolution which she has to follow before she can reach Śiva. However, from the very beginning she knows that it is her destiny to marry Śiva, for Nārada who knows the past and the future prophesied, when he saw her near her father, that she would marry the Supreme Lord (1.50).

Even after this knowledge, even after Himālaya appoints her to serve Śiva, Kāma tries to use her as an instrument of desire. When Kāma sees Śiva in meditation his courage fails; he does not dare to shoot his arrows; his bow slips down from his hand. Then comes Pārvatī with all her voluptuous beauty and Kāma's courage revives. Her beauty, says the poet, puts to shame even the beauty of Rati (3.57). This metaphor reveals to us that Pārvatī is still on the side of Kāma; she is still Desire incarnate; she is still the embodiment of Beauty that is Kāma's.

Such then are the two principal characters standing on two opposite poles. But neither of them is static. There is in both the characters an evolution, though the nature of the evolution is different in the two cases. Śiva seems to fall from the high status of quiescence; but this is only an appearance. He who is the source of all, and holds all world-process within himself only manifests his power, he only becomes dynamic. There is no diminution. We may even say that his evolution is really a series of disguises as *brahmacārin*, as bridegroom, husband, lover which he assumes in order to be near to nature and man. He remains eternally the Supreme.

On the other hand Pārvatī's evolution is a real unfolding, a rise towards her true self, towards her highest destiny through a process of gradual purification. On the one side there is the descent of God, on the other the ascent of man towards the godhead. Śiva can assume any form he wants; all is the expression of his world-plan. Therefore in his actions there is no logic except in relation to human action. Destruction of Kāma is no doubt a mythological event, but it is significant only for men. Even before he saw Kāma and knew the cause of the tumult of the senses, *indriyakṣobha*, at the

presence of Pārvatī, he had brought his mind and senses under control, *vaśitvā* (3.69). Yet he burnt Kāma. Why ? Because Kāma is the hindrance to *tapas*, *tapaḥ-parāmarśa* (3.71) ; and also to teach that God cannot be attained as long as there is Desire, Kāma, unpurified by the fire of *tapas*. This burning of Kāma is the mythological expression of the psychological process of self-purification which we see in Pārvatī's *tapas*. Therefore what really should concern us is the psychological adventure of Pārvatī which leads to the final union, and the nature and significance of that union.

(A) *Means of Union*

Pārvatī is destined, from the very beginning, to be Śiva's bride; Nārada has prophesied it. The poet too hints metaphorically to the same destiny :

ṛte Kṛśānor na hi mantra-pūtam arhanti tejāṃsy aparāṇi havyam (1.51)

. . . for, no glow other than the fire deserves oblations purified by sacred hymns.

Himālaya wants for his daughter only Śiva as husband. The metaphor that the poet then uses, as if to justify this desire of Himālaya, (note the conjunction *hi*), shows that Pārvatī is an offering which is to be given to the Highest God. But is she already *mantra-pūtā*, purified ? An offering purified by *mantra* is given only to the Fire, Agni Kṛśānu. This hints at the result, the final outcome, the destiny ; not necessarily at the present condition. Also the association of Fire with Śiva is made here ; Fire is a polyvalent symbol in Śiva-mythology; Kālidāsa too has made use of this symbol.

Pārvatī must go a long way before she can reach her divine lover. In the beginning two different possibilities open up before us : firstly, Himālaya's desire to offer his daughter as wife to Śiva. With this aim in view he sends Pārvatī to wait upon the great ascetic, the supreme Lord who is adored even by the dwellers of heaven, *svargaukasām arcita* (1.58). This is the path of service.

Secondly, Indra's plan to use Pārvatī as Kāma's weapon in order to make Śiva fall in love with Pārvatī like any mortal or like the lower gods. This is the path of seduction. If the plan succeeded Pārvatī would get her desired husband.

But Indra's plan was bound to fail, for Indra wanted to force upon Śiva the beauty of Pārvatī ; he wanted, in a moment of delusion, to have mastery

over the Supreme Lord. But here we are quite unequivocally told that Śiva is adored by the gods, dwellers of heaven. He is therefore mightier than these heavenly gods, including Indra himself.

There remains then the other path, the path of service. And this service seems to fail in the beginning, but that is because it is not yet *mantra-pūta*; because Pārvatī is still enamoured of her outward beauty. Because of this she could also be used as an instrument by Kāma. Her real purification begins only when she dissociates herself from this outward form, *nininda rūpam* (5.1).

Nevertheless this service, *śuśruṣā*, is the first step towards self-awareness and knowledge. Śiva accepts her as *śuśruṣamānā* (1.59). This reminds us of the Vedic students who went to the master's home to serve the master, and acquire knowledge and self-mastery, and get prepared for the life of a householder. She has also to follow a similar line of development in order to reach her goal.

But Indra wants to use her as he uses the heavenly nymphs against the ascetics. Kāma is one of Indra's weapon. And Pārvatī is depicted as Kāma's weapon. But this plan miscarries; Kāma is burnt to ashes by the fire of Śiva's frontal eye.

Here we shall stop to ponder over the symbolism of fire. This symbol is used in several contexts which are interlinked and reveal a significant structure.

Śiva destroys Kāma with the fire of his third eye. What is interesting to note here is that the poet uses the fire-symbol both for Śiva and for Kāma.

First let us take Kāma. He has boasted of his power that no one, not even the mighty God Rudra–Śiva will be able to resist him. Then Indra orders him to carry out the scheme that he has thought out. He says further that spring, Vasanta, the friend of Kāma, will certainly accompany him; one need not even request him. Who has to ask the wind to fan the fire :

samīraṇo nodayitā bhaveti vyādiśyate kena Hutāśanasya (3.21)

Who asks the wind, "Fan the fire !" ?

This makes clear the well-known association of Desire with Fire, in poetry. This Fire is however put in opposition to the other fire, Śiva, who is the personification of *tapas*, at least upto the end of Book 5. The poet says that Śiva practised *tapas* with the fire kindled in front of him, the fire which is one of his own forms, *mūrty-antaram* (1.57). This fire is that of *tapas*. And we

have to remember here also the light that rises from his head and emanates from the third eye (3.49).

This fire of *tapas* which is contained in him is then energized and burns Kāma :

sphurann udarciḥ sahasā tṛtīyād akṣṇaḥ kṛśānuḥ kila niṣpapāta (3.71)

...and all at once, it is said, a high-blazing fire shot forth from his third eye.

The dynamic nature of this fire is wonderfully expressed by the words *sphuran*, *sahasā* and *udarciḥ*. That fire of *tapas* which was contained now darts out and overwhelms the fire of desire. Henceforth it will be this *tapas*-fire, which will help Pārvatī to become purified, *mantra-pūtā*. The destruction of Kāma which is so spectacularly depicted has yet to be realised psychologically by Pārvatī in order to be a fit offering to Śiva. The fire of destruction is the same as the fire of purification. And when the purification is complete, Kāma revives. The force of love is a universal force as the force of creation. It is the first impulse of Brahman; but only when this is followed by *tapas* can there be creation, *sarga*. When Kāma is revived, the antithesis between the two fires do not exist any longer ; they are harmonized in a fire of love and creation, first in the world of men, governed by the law of *dharma*. The fire of *dharma* is the sacrificial fire, which a householder kindles and keeps burning in his home. That is why when Śiva decides to marry he tells the Seven Sages, upholders of *dharma*, that he wants to take Pārvatī for wife, as the sacrificer, *yajamāna*, procures fuel, *araṇi*, for the sacred fire (5.28). The fire is also the witness of the wedding of Śiva and Pārvatī :

vadhūṃ dvijaḥ prāha tavaiṣa vatse vahnir vivāhaṃ prati karma-sākṣī (7.83)

The priest told the bride, "Child, this fire is the witness of the marriage-rites."

Finally the last stage of that fire is the fire of universal creation, the fire in the waters as conceived by the Vedic seers, *jvalana iva samudrāntargata* (8.91).

The burning of Kāma shows also that Pārvatī's love for Śiva was not pure : Kāma incarnates only the first phase of her love for the Lord. In fact, there are two impurities : one, the fact that Pārvatī thought Śiva could be attained by beauty, *lalitam vapuḥ* ; two, Himālaya's desire to have Śiva as

his son-in-law. The burning of Kāma makes both Himālaya's desire, and Pārvatī's desire vain :

śailātma-jāpi pitur ucchiraśo 'bhilāṣam
vyarthaṃ samarthya lalitaṃ vapur ātmanaś ca (...)
śūnyā jagāma bhavanābhimukhī kathaṃ cit (3.75)

And the Mountain's daughter seeing the failure of the desire of her exalted father and also the failure of the loveliness of her body, (...) forlorn, toiled along homeward.

The expression *pitur ucchiraśo*, "of the father whose head was high", indicates 'pride', and therefore his *abhilāṣā*, desire, to have Śiva as his son-in-law is not unselfish.

The word *śūnyā*, empty, forlorn, is also significant. Upto this moment she was Kāma's weapon, her strength and zeal came from Kāma. With his destruction she feels abandoned, emptied.

Here begins the next phase. She now knows that the beauty of the physical body is not, in the words of Tagore, "the highest glory, the supreme beauty of a woman."[1] Therefore she repudiates that beauty, and resolves to transform it. We should notice that *rūpa* is not to be abandoned. Kālidāsa does not consider all beauty as an obstacle ; only that beauty which is a snare of Kāma, a weapon of Kāma, is an obstacle to the union. Beauty is there to be offered to the Lord. But in order to make that offering acceptable it must be purified of all desire. Therefore Kālidāsa says later :

nininda rūpaṃ hṛdayena Pārvatī priyeṣu saubhāgya-phalā hi cārutā (5.1)

Pārvatī cursed her beauty, from the bottom of heart : beauty's fulfilment lies only in the happiness that comes from being loved (by the beloved).

Rūpa which is made use of in order to satisfy one's own desire is not real beauty; for real beauty, *cārutā*, is that which gives happiness to the Beloved. Not I, but Thou. And so not the abandonment of beauty but a purification of beauty, a change in the direction,—beauty not turned towards one's selfish desire but towards the delight of the Lover. Therefore Pārvatī's *tapas* was to make *avandhya*, fruitful, her beauty which was *vyartha*, vain.

iyeṣa sā kartuṃ avandhya-rūpatāṃ samādhim āsthāya tapobhir ātmanaḥ (5.2)

She felt the desire to bring to consummation her beauty by devoting herself to yogic concentration with austerities.

Rūpa, form, beauty, is not to be sacrificed; it has to be transmuted; likewise *Kāma*, Desire, is not Dead for ever; he will rise up again, we are told by the heavenly voice. But will that be the same Kāma ? Pārvatī's *tapas* is also for the transmutation of *kāma*. When *kāma* is transformed to *preman*, to *bhakti* only then can her beauty be transmuted. Beauty and Love are interconnected. So we have a double transmutation, the goal being the union with the Lord. We shall now see the process of that union.

Let us not consider the philosophical discussions about God—union. Different schools have shown different ways of reaching the goal; and the ways depend also on the goal one sets before oneself. But we may recall the *bhakti*-path of the Gītā. Of the four kinds of virtuous people who turn towards God, the best says Kṛṣṇa, is the knower, *jñānin*, with one-pointed love for the Divine :

teṣāṃ jñānī nitya-yukta eka-bhaktir viśiṣyate
priyo hi jñānino 'tyartham ahaṃ sa ca mama priyaḥ (VII. 17)

Of those he is the best—the man of knowledge, ever united with God, with love for God alone; I am exceedingly dear to him and he too is dear to me.

Bhakti here is related to *jñāna*, knowledge. And the highest kind of love is that of the *jñānin*, the knower. And elsewhere Kṛṣṇa says that *jñāna* is *tapas* :

bahavo jñāna-tapasā pūtā mad-bhāvam āgatāḥ (IV. 10)

Many purified by the *tapas* of knowledge have attained my divine nature.

Here Kṛṣṇa gives a symbolic meaning to the word *tapas*; it not the physical austerities and mortifications. But physical austerities have also the same function, that of burning down the impurities, ignorances. And Kālidāsa too uses the physical austerities as a symbol for burning the lower *kāma* which is an ignorant or partial vision. Poetically the practice of physical austerities is more powerful because of their concreteness. Kālidāsa is thus able to give a visible picture of *tapas* and does not need to remain content, like the authors of philosophical works, with the expression of abstract ideas.

When we thus equate Pārvatī's *tapas* with the *jñāna-tapas* of the Gītā, we get the process which leads to the union with God : *tapas* purifies the being,

changes *kāma* into *bhakti*. And when there is *bhakti*, God himself takes charge.

The process can also be inverted, from *bhakti* one can reach true knowledge, *bhaktyā mām abhijānāti* (Gītā. XVIII, 55). In that case the dynamic element of purification is love. Whatever be the processes, the yogic methods, there must be *tapas*, the energy of purification, and love, the element which is purified. And then there is the divine grace. When the love is pure and wholly turned towards the Divine, the Divine himself comes down, and leads the seeker to the highest union :

mat-prasādād avāpnoti śāśvataṃ padaṃ avyayam (Gītā. XVIII, 56)

By my grace he attains the eternal and imperishable status.

We shall now try to examine how Kālidāsa has developed these ideas poetically. Pārvatī realizes the inadequacy of *dharmic* adoration, of service, of worship to which her father had engaged her. These can lead one to the heaven of gods, not to the Supreme. *Tapas*, she understands, is the only means of going beyond *dharma*, however exalted may the latter's ideals be. *Tapas* is also a drastic change of the whole nature. Her tender body, *lalitaṃ vapuḥ*, seat of Kāma, weapon of Kāma, has to be burnt in the fire of *tapas* before she can be ready for the highest love. There is first an unshakable decision which abandons all social and domestic *dharma*, the ideals of the householder, abandons in fact the first three aims of life : *kāma*, *artha*, *dharma*. This is dramatically presented through the attitude of her mother :

niśamya caināṃ tapase kṛtodyamāṃ sutāṃ Girīśa-pratisakta-mānasām
uvāca Menā parirabhya vakṣasā nivārayantī mahato muni-vratāt (5.3)

manīṣitāḥ santi gṛheṣu devatās tapaḥ kva vatse kva ca tāvakaṃ vapuḥ (5.4)

When she learnt that her daughter's heart was set on Śiva, and that she was resolved to practise *tapas*, Menā drew her to her bosom and in order to dissuade her from the difficult vow of austerity, said : "There are, at home, divinities who can fulfil your heart's desire. Why then, child, this *tapas* so unlike (the delicacy of) your body."

These three lines express concisely and unequivocally Pārvatī's decision, her steadfastness in that decision, and the goal she proposes to reach. Her mind is fixed on Śiva, and on no other lower god. The worry and fear of the mother is understandable, *tapaḥ kva vatse kva ca tāvakaṃ vapuḥ*. This *tāvakaṃ vapuḥ* is the crux of the matter ; it is this that has to be changed. But the

mother who is bound to the domestic *dharma* sees only the great gap between *tapas* and *tāvakaṃ vapuḥ*; she ignores that *tapas* is the only way of transmuting this body and its outward beauty. The mother is bound to the gods of hearth and home, *gṛheṣu devatāḥ*,—the gods of worship, the gods of the householders' *dharma*. Pārvatī's goal is Śiva; her resolve is taken, *Girīśa-pratisakta-mānasā*. The steadfastness of Pārvatī's resolve and the superiority of her ideal to that of her mother's is again stated in the following verse :

> iti dhruvecchām anuśāsatī sutāṃ śaśāka Menā na niyantum udyamāt
> ka īpsitārtha-sthira-niścayaṃ manaḥ payaś ca nimnābhimukhaṃ pratīpayet (5.5)

> Thus did Menā admonish her daughter whose will was unswerving, but she could not talk her out of her resolve. Who can turn back a mind which is unshakably determined to attain its desired goal, or a water-flow coursing downwards ?

Himālaya too recognizes his daughter's unwavering resolve. He does not try to dissuade her; he is satisfied by her perseverance, *abhiniveśa* (5.7), and gives her permission to go to the hill Gaurīśikhara and perform *tapas*.

Now begins the stripping : she removes all ornaments, signs of pleasure and attachment to the worldly objects, from her body. She even goes further, for she abandons even her natural attributes of beauty, signs of desire, weapons of Kāma : her graceful movement, *vilāsa-ceṣṭitam*, and her tremulous glance, *vilola-dṛṣṭam* (5.13). And in the forest the mode of life she leads becomes an example to the hermits :

> kṛtābhiṣekāṃ huta-jātavedasaṃ tvag-uttarāsaṅgavatīm adhītinīm
> didṛkṣavas tām ṛṣayo 'bhyupāgaman na dharma-vṛddheṣu vayaḥ samīkṣyate (5.16)

> She performed dutifully her ablutions, offered oblations to the fire, wore a bark on her upper body and recited sacred hymns : even great sages came to see her—age of those who are ripe in righteousness, *dharma*, hardly matters.

This is already a far cry from the Pārvatī who was used as the weapon of Kāma. She is a model of renunciation, *vairāgya*; by her presence *ahiṃsā* is established in the forest, and the spirit of charity, *dāna* : she makes the whole hermitage pure (5.17).

But this is not enough. This is still within the domain of *dharma*,—no longer the *dharma* of the *gṛhastha*, but that of the hermits, of the forest-

dwellers. She is not yet free although she has reached a high status in *dharma*. Note the word *dharma-vṛddheṣu* (5.16).

This is also *tapas* but Pārvatī must go beyond towards a greater *tapas*, *tapo mahat* (5.18). After this follows the description of her arduous austerities; (2) this shows that she exerts herself to the utmost so as to change the *vapus*, human, unregenerated body, into a body fit for God. In this *tapas*, fire is one of the important means. Kālidāsa however speaks also of the other means, fasting, standing in cold water etc. Nevertheless *fire* has a special symbolic value. We have seen fire destroy Kāma; here too fire is the element that destroys *kāma* in Pārvatī's heart. Fire burns all the dross of the being and makes it pure. This description of *tapas* makes visible the gradual purification of Pārvatī's body and mind.

In the two stages of her *tapas*, we find also the suggestion that the first stage which represents the ethical purification is not sufficient. The body itself has to be purified if one has to reach the highest goal. It is the change of the *lalitaṃ vapuḥ*, the tender body, seat of *kāma*, into a body of strength, a seat of *tapas*. Beauty has not vanished; the body is still *pelava*, delicate, but the strength of *tapas* that it has achieved far surpasses that of the ascetics :

> mṛṇālikā-pelavam evam-ādibhir vrataiḥ svam aṅgaṃ glapayanty aharniśam
>
> tapaḥ śarīraiḥ kaṭhinair upārjitaṃ tapasvināṃ dūram adhaś-cakāra sā (5.29)
>
> Day and night, wasting her body, delicate as a lotus-stalk, by severe observances of this sort, she left far behind the *tapas* practised by ascetics with hardy bodies.

The words *pelavam aṅgam* echo the words *lalitaṃ vapuḥ*, but we notice that now it is the body the beauty of which is no longer a plaything of *Kāma*.

There is also another suggestion in this verse—the bodies of the hermits are hardened; they do not care for physical beauty and grace. But Kālidāsa's ideal was far from the ascetic ideal of physical mortification which left the body devoid of beauty : his ideal is that *tapas* which purifies the physical beauty and makes the body too a fit vehicle of God's expression : a fit offering to the Supreme Lover.

That this *tapas* of Pārvatī is far more than *dharma*, that she aspires to a status higher than what man gains by the performance of *dharma* is also seen, in her encounter with the *brahmacārin*. The *brahmacārin*, Śiva in disguise,

insists from the very first instant of his meeting with Pārvatī, on the dharmic aspect, or more generally on the *tri-varga*. He suggests to Pārvatī that she has achieved the highest status in life, namely *dharma*, and she has nothing more to ask for. But Pārvatī is not to be caught in the snare of this refined temptation. And we too, if we want to understand Kālidāsa's real intention, should read carefully between the lines. The questions the student puts are all related to the practice of dharmic rites. And when he says, *śarīram ādyam khalu dharma-sādhanam* (5.33), he seems to say : You are here to perform *dharma*, and in order to do that adequately you must look after your physical health. This is no doubt a high ideal. And Śiva tries to find out whether Pārvatī is satisfied with this ideal, or wants something more. Again, after having praised her beauty and her virtue he says that *dharma* seems to him to be the essence of the three objects of life : *dharmaḥ.. me tri-varga-sāraḥ pratibhāti* (5.38).

It may seem to a casual reader that Śiva lays an exclusive stress on *dharma*, as if there was nothing higher than that. But he does not really say anything of the kind; what he says is that, out of the *three*, *dharma* appears to be the best. He does not say that there is nothing outside of this *tri-varga;* he does not indeed say that *dharma is* the best even within this group ; he says quite emphatically that it *strikes to be*, *pratibhāti*, the essence of the *tri-varga*. Later he says that Pārvatī possesses everything that one may desire in this world, the best family, that which is issued from Brahmā (*dharma*), she is young and beautiful (*kāma*), he has riches and prosperity (*artha*)—and asks :

tapaḥ-phalaṃ syāt kim ataḥ param (5.41)

can the fruit of *tapas* be beyond this ?

This question of Śiva is frought with meaning. Again and again Śiva reiterates that Pārvatī's *tapas* is useless if she desires the highest gratifications of *kāma*, *artha* and *dharma*, because she has these already : If you desire heaven, your effort is vain, *divaṃ yadi prārthayase vṛthā śramaḥ* (5.45), because the Himālayan regions governed by your father are the godly realms. Pārvatī, he adds, can have any one whom she desires for her husband :

na dṛśyate prārthayitavya eva te bhaviṣyati prārthita-durlabhaḥ
katham (5.46)

I see no one who would even be fit to be desired by you. How then can it be difficult for you to get someone whom you desire ?

There seems to be nothing beyond her reach, nothing in these three worlds. Notice the word *prārthita-durlabha*. This question of the student is

later answered by Pārvatī's friend who says that there is indeed one who is *prārthita-durlabha* (5.61). The friend reports that Pārvatī has spurned the heavenly gods, Indra and others; her heart is set on Śiva alone, who has destroyed Kāma. Beauty cannot win him, *arūpa-hārya* (5.53); he can only be reached through *tapas* :

> yadā ca tasyādhigame jagat-pater apaśyad anyaṃ vidhiṃ vicinvatī
> tadā sahāsmābhir anujñayā guror iyaṃ prapannā tapase tapo-vanam
> (5.59)

> And when seeking to win the Lord of the world she saw no other means, she with the permission of her father came with us to this penance-grove for practising *tapas*.

And further the spirited retort of Pārvatī herself :

> yathā śrutaṃ veda-vidāṃ vara tvayā jano 'yam uccaiḥ-pada-laṅghanotsukaḥ
> tapaḥ kiledaṃ tad-avāpti-sādhanaṃ manorathānām agatir na vidyate
> (5.64)

> You the greatest among the knowers of the Veda, you have heard well : I yearn to rise to the highest status. It is said that only through *tapas* can one reach that. There is nothing unattainable if one puts one's mind to it.

We realize that this *uccaiḥ-pada*, the high status is beyond the reach of *dharma*. The expression *veda-vidāṃ vara*, seems to be rather ironical. By this Pārvatī seems to say, You may know all the Veda, but the status I aspire to is still higher ; of that you can have no knowledge.

A few, verses earlier, when the student learnt that Pārvatī wanted no one else but Śiva, he was pleased, because it proved that she was not satisfied with the worldly achievements however high they might be. He was glad but did not show his gladness; he wanted to know if she had resolved the apparent contradictions that are attributed to him. When they are resolved the choice is not only made in the heart, but also in knowledge.

The student, then, did not show his gladness : *avyañjita-harṣa-lakṣaṇaḥ* (5.62). Kale comments on this gladness by saying that Śiva "had come there as a lover as suggested by *avyañjita-harṣa-lakṣaṇaḥ*; the ascetic was rejoiced at heart to see how deep Pārvatī's love for him was..." (3) This comment fails to grasp the real intention of the poet; "lover' is used as the translation of *vilāsin*, that is to say a sensuous lover. If it were so, Śiva did

not need to come in disguise; he knew that very well otherwise why would he have burnt Kāma. So it is not the *depth of love* which he comes to measure but the *nature of love*; to see if her love had become pure and free of *kāma*.

The meaning of Pārvatī's *tapas* is the transmutation of *kāma*, into *preman*. We shall now consider this change.

The context in which Kālidāsa uses the word *preman* to denote love shows that *preman* is quite different from *kāma*, or rather a higher form of *kāma* bereft of what is phenomenal, egoistic, unconscious and instinctive in it; *preman* is a truer love without vanity, without the spirit of possession.[4] The first time we come across the word is when Nārada declares that Pārvatī will unite with Śiva "through love", *premnā* (1.50). When we ponder over this statement in the background of the whole situation and the different occurences, we reach the certitude that *preman* is the disinterested love of God, a love in which the ego-principle disappears, and the beloved becomes a part and parcel of the lover : this last notion is in this case expressed by the expression *śarīrārdha-harā*, she who steals the half of his body, evoking the iconic representation of *ardha-nārīśvara*.

Again we meet this word when Pārvatī, after having seen the failure and death of Kāma, decides to perform *tapas*, so that her beauty becomes fruitful, *avandhya-rūpatā*, i. e. an offering acceptable to God. The path of *kāma* is that of facility, of *pravṛtti*, involvement in the lower activities of life. When one follows this path one gets involved in the phenomenal world of appearances, in luxury, wealth, pleasure, in the outward beauty of form. This cannot lead to union; it brings about disaster and separation. Such seems to be the purport of Kāma's death and the immediate disappearance of Śiva to avoid the propinquity of women :

stri-saṃnikarṣaṃ parihartum icchann antar-dadhe (3.74)
...wanting to avoid the proximity of women he went away...

And in this separation Pārvatī realizes that, in order to reach the Divine, to have God as Lord and Master, she must quit the path of facility and phenomenal existence, and undertake to travel on the path of constant effort, *tapas* :

avāpyate vā katham anyathā dvayaṃ tathā-vidhaṃ prema patiś ca tādṛśaḥ (5.2)

How else could she get these two things : such love (*preman*) and such a husband (*pati*) ?

This shows that *preman*, love, which Pārvatī seeks is the opposite of *kāma*. Opposite, true, but we should remember the Hermetic saying, "the below is like the above, only inverted".[5] For afterwards this *preman* will be expressed with images related to *kāma* which is more concrete, and personified, therefore poetically more rewarding.

Mark also the adjectives qualifying *preman* and *pati*, respectively *tathā-vidham* and *tādṛśaḥ*, both of which mean "such". The status of these two concepts are so high, that no word is capable of defining or qualifying them. We stand before them awe-struck and can but exclaim : *yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasa saha* (Taitt. Up. II. 9.1), "from where speech accompanied by mind return defeated."

Such is then the love that Pārvatī sets out to conquer, and does conquer. Therefore when the *brahmacārin* speaks ill of Śiva, Pārvatī gives her reply in fiery words which reach the climax with the following verse, a testimony of her love that is pure and intense :

> alaṃ vivādena yathā śrutas tvayā tathā-vidhas tāvad aśeṣam astu saḥ
> mamātra bhāvaika-rasaṃ manaḥ sthitaṃ na kāma-vṛttir vacanīyam ikṣate (5.82)
>
> We have argued enough ! Even if he were exactly as you have heard him to be, my heart which knows no other feeling but love is attached to him : one who follows one's desire is impervious to censure.

This love does not care for the world's censure or approval; the expression *bhāvaika-rasaṃ manaḥ* denotes precisely the situation : her mind takes delight only in love, *bhāva*; nothing else matters. We may compare this with the expression *eka-bhakti* (Gītā. VII. 17) which we have quoted earlier.

This love, *preman*, is the culmination of *tapas*. After this one has nothing more to do. Then comes the divine grace, *tat-prasāda* (Gītā. XVIII, 62), *deva-prasāda* (Śv. Up. VI. 21). And indeed the grace pours down unexpectedly. Śiva abandons the disguise of the *brahmacārin*, and appears in his real form saying :

> adya prabhṛty avanatāṅgi tavāsmi dāsaḥ
> krītas tapobhir iti vādini Candra-maulau
> ahnāya sā niyama-jaṃ klamaṁ utsasarja
> kleśaḥ phalena hi punar-navatāṃ vidhatte (5.86)
>
> O you with stooping limbs, henceforth I am your slave; you have bought me with your *tapas*,—when the mooncrested god said this, Pārvatī at

once lost all weariness caused by her ascetic observances : for, when we get the fruit of our labour our strength renews.

God is indeed the servant of love purified by *tapas*.

B. Nature and significance of Union

When Śiva says' "I am your slave", the climax is reached, there seems to be nothing more ; *kāma* is transmuted into *preman*, and god has accepted that pure love. Yet we have to see the implications in the following Books.

Psychologically and spiritually the union is achieved, but there is always the world, the society, the home. Love is a tremendous force in nature. Pārvatī has conquered the natural impulses and gone beyond, beyond even the summits reached by ascetics, beyond the highest laws of *dharma*. This is an ideal which only a few can achieve ; there is still the huge mass of humanity, tormented, torn by *Kāma*, used as his playful targets. Will Śiva and Pārvatī withdraw into the world of their personal bliss, united for ever in the eternal imperishable love of the Spirit ? Kālidāsa recongnized that eternal union, but he was not indifferent to the world and humanity around him. On one side he saw asceticism which denied the world, and concentrated all its effort to reach *nirvāṇa*. On the other hand he saw men engrossed in their life of pleasure, the rich luxurious society of princes and courtiers which followed its path of unbridled pursuit of desire, of *kāma* and *artha*. From the evidences we gather out of his works, we can conclude that he was painfully aware of this extreme dichatomy in life, and sought for a solution. The solution was there in the ancient scriptures, the Veda, the Upniṣad, the Gītā : the life-affirmation of the *ṛṣi*, *tena tyaktena bhuñjithā*, the ideal of the four *āśrama*, and the *catur-varga* which would gradually lead men, not by life-negation, but by life's fulfilment, to the highest stage of union in love with the Beloved Lord Śiva, the source of all Knowledge, all Bliss. The ideal of a poet is to impart *rasa* and to experience *rasa*, the delight in poetic utterances. Therefore his ideal in life cannot be the denial of delight in existence, or in God who is all Delight. Kālidāsa was not a philosopher ; he has poetically felt that the principle of love should not be negated in life by taking an exclusive recourse to dry asceticism, but it has to be canalized and purified. And beyond life, liberation too will not mean a denial of love and form, *preman* and *rūpa*, but an union with the Supreme in love and beauty.

Such are indeed the ideas which we find suggested in the last three Books ; Book 6 and Book 7 consolidate the principles of *kāma* and *artha* with *dharma*, which is the highest all-pervading principle of life in the world. The

composition of Book 8 is of special significance; it is as if an epitome of the ideas which we have just mentioned. There is first the expression of *kāma*, then *artha*, after which comes *dharma*. The final part is that of liberated love, of *mokṣa* as union with the Divine. It is the *kāma* inverted; the images are all taken from the erotic field; for, sexual imagery supplies indeed the most concrete metaphors for the union of the individual soul with God. The Sanskrit poet had no prudery or puritanism as regards erotic images; not only did society condone such usage, but erotic emotion and erotic expressions were considered the basic elements of the poetic world. Therefore the use of erotic images symbolically fulfilled a double purpose : (a) the poet could use freely these images which gave contour and consistency to the poetic utterance and avoided its becoming an anaemic theological discourse on divine love; (b) the poem could be read and enjoyed for its beauty and outward erotic emotions even by those who were incapable of grasping the symbolic undertone.

Let us first consider the *dharmic* reconciliation as the worldly ideal. Almost from the very opening of Book 6 a new cycle of events appear to repeat the old situations; spring seems to appear in the body of Pārvatī : she is like the mango-twig in spring, *cūta-yaṣṭir iva...madhau* (6.2). But she is no longer Kāma's weapon. Śiva himself finds it difficult to permit her to go, *visṛjya katham api Umām* (6.3). One would think that Śiva was a love-lorn young suitor, but the poet, in order to avoid any misconception, qualifies him in the same verse as the chastiser of Kāma, *Smara-śāsanaḥ*. He shows that here ordinary erotic love is out of question. It is the ideal of *dharma* that is to be upheld in the world. Consequently Śiva asks the Seven Sages to arrange for the wedding. These sages are, we have seen, *dharma* embodied. We learn from Śiva's mouth that the sages have composed the *ācara*, which we know are the body of *dharma* : *bhavat-praṇītam ācāram* (6.31). These sages have practised *tapas* and are now enjoying the fruits of that, remaining still *tapasvin* :

tapasām upabhuñjānāḥ phalāny api tapasvinaḥ (6.10)
...who while enjoying the fruits of their asceticism still remain ascetics.

This shows quite clearly that here we have the expression of the ideal of *dharma* in the world, not the complete liberation or union with God. The reason of the marriage is also the performance of *dharma* (6.13), and Kāma sanctified by the sacrament of marriage will be revived; the promise is on the point of fulfilment (6.14).

In the worldly life *dharma* is the highest moral and religious norm. With its help one can reach an exhalted state, a region above the Sun and the

Moon, like the Seven Sages (7, 19) ; but the grace of God, the love of God is the highest. *Dharma* is still bound by the dualities and contradictions of the intellectual knowledge. Therefore the Seven Sages admit their ignorance of the Real Śiva ; they pray for his grace, and recognize the inadequancy of intellect :

prasīda kathayātmānaṃ na dhiyāṃ pathi vartase (6.22)

Be propitious ! Speak about yourself, for the intellect cannot find you on its way.

This point is to be remembered, that Śiva is beyond and above *dharma* ; even when he marries, accepts the carnal pleasures, he remains untouched, ever free. What he is doing is not his real nature, it is phenomenal ; it is for the welfare of the world. Says he to the sages :

viditaṃ vo yathā svārthā na me kāścit pravṛttayaḥ (6.26)

You know it well : nothing whatsoever I do is for my own sake.

Yes, for the welfare of the world, for the re-establishment of *dharma*, *dharma-saṃsthāpanārthāya* (Gītā), for procreating a son (6.27) who will free heaven from the forces of darkness.

Śiva acts as the upholder of *dharma*, giving to the world the example of life guided by *dharma*. And the *dharma* here is not that of world-negation, not even the negation of physical love. That Kālidāsa wanted a synthesis of the ideal of ascetic celibacy and the life of the senses is clear from the fact that Śiva's wedding redeems the Seven Sages from the *shame* of married life (6.34).

However we should not forget that for Śiva it is his world-act ; he assumes the role of the householder. And even though Kālidāsa speaks often of the Supreme God, the Father of the universe, the Inner Self, etc. yet when he is made to assume the human role he is made as tangible, as human as any one of us, not just an allegorical symbol. We know that Śiva has burnt Kāma, nevertheless the pangs of separation and the eager waiting are suggested brilliantly and concretely :

Paśu-patir api tāny ahāni kṛcchrād agamayad Adri-sutā-samāgamotkaḥ
kam aparam avaśaṃ na viprakuryur vibhum api tam yad amī spṛśanti bhāvāḥ (6.95)

And longing to unite with the Mountain's daughter Śiva found it difficult to pass those days. Will these emotions then not trouble every

other person not master of himself when even the Lord is agitated by them?

These touches of human feelings make the whole action of Śiva believable and acceptable to us. We feel that he is like us, near to us. An *avatāra* has to be man while remaining in knowledge and power the Supreme.

Like the renunciation and transformation of *kāma*, there is also the renunciation and transformation of *artha*. Pārvatī had abandoned her ornaments, all bodily decoration, unguents, powders, sandal-paste etc., but now, for her wedding she is made to put them on again, as a bride, *sā maṇḍanān maṇḍanam anvabhuṅkta* (7.5). But the putting on of ornaments has here a new meaning, that of *dharma*, of auspiciousness, *maṅgala* :

> na cakṣuṣoḥ kānti-viśeṣa-buddhyā kālāñjanaṃ maṅgalam ity upāttam (7.20)
>
> ...not because they (who adorned her) thought that black collyrium would increase the beauty of her eyes, but because it would be auspicious for her.

The decorations do not add to Pārvatī's beauty. She has now acquired true beauty, *bhūtārtha–śobhā* (7.13); She too, like Śiva is beyond the *tri-varga*, but they both act as human beings should do. This is quite evident when we read that Pārvatī is made by her mother to bow down to the family deities, *kula-devatā*, whom she had repudiated for the quest of Śiva :

> tām arcitābhyaḥ kula-devatābhyaḥ kula-pratiṣṭhāṃ praṇamayya mātā akārayat kārayitavya-dakṣa krameṇa pāda-grahaṇaṃ satīnām (7.27)
>
> Her mother, well-versed in what ought to be done, made her, who was the keystone of the family, bow before the tutelary deities worshipped in the family, and in due order touch the feet of the ladies (in respectful homage).

Everything is on a lower plane than that of the true spiritual union. When Śiva reaches Oṣadhiprastha he bows down to Himālaya, for although he is adored by the three worlds, *trailokya-vandya*, yet the social *dharma* places the father-in-law on a more respectable rank.

It is in this atmosphere and reign of *dharma* that *Kāma* is born anew, in the body of Pārvatī; but he is no longer the master there. Himālaya offers his daughter's hand to Śiva; and Kālidāsa compares the hand to the first burgeon of *kāma* : *smarasya... pūrvam iva praroham* (7.76). And Śiva too shares equally with her, the effect of love (7.77). And finally when they are

married, Kāma gets back his body. He has evidently no role in the bringing about of the union. Only after the marriage is he allowed, in his new form, to serve the couple. The gods beg Śiva to allow Kāma to have his influence on the Lord, so that a son may be born who would deliver heaven from the demons. Śiva agrees (7.92-93). Here too we notice that Kāma is the slave of *dharma*; Śiva the bridegroom is the master, and love is no longer a blind impulse but a conscious choice.

The marriage clearly symbolizes the union in *dharma*;—Himālaya offers Pārvatī as alms to Śiva, the Universal Self, and thus he gets the merits which come to one who performs the rites and sacrifices incumbent on the householder as prescribed by *dharma*. This is the idea we gather from Himālaya's speech to Pārvatī when he tells her that she is the alms he offers to Śiva, and by doing so he gets the desired fruits of the householder, *prāptaṃ gṛha-medhi-phalam mayā* (6.88).

We shall now turn our attention to Book 8, in which, as I have hinted earlier, we can distinguish four movements. The first two movements are very sharply differentiated; the transition from the third movement to the fourth is less clear-cut.

(i) *First movement* : *kāma*

This movement consists of the first 20 verses in which is described the story of the couple in Himālaya's house. The transition to the next is marked unambiguously by their leaving the palace. Śiva passes one whole month at the palace of Himālaya pursuing the path of sensual love, *kāma*, with his newly-wedded wife Pārvatī.

This is the pleasure-principle in life, *kāma*; this has also its place in Kālidāsa's world-vision. However it is not an instinctive ignorant impulse of the senses, it is a conscious action as is clearly shown by the compound *anugṛhīta-Manmathaḥ* (8.20); Śiva shows favour to *Kāma* because it is a power which has its function and utility in creation. The end of the stage is marked by the fact that now the divine couple leaves for other destinations.

This first passage gives a beautiful picture of carnal love sanctified by religious sacrament, for the passage opens with the words *pāṇi-pīḍana-vidher anantaram* (8.1); after the wedding was performed according to prescribed rules, did the delight of love's longing become charming, *abhūt kāma-dohada-sukhaṃ mano-haram* (8.1). After this Kālidāsa shows the gradual unfolding of love. We can find in this description echoes of *Kāma-śāstra*, but the love, though carnal, is yet of a sublimer nature. Pārvatī repudiates those aspects

of sexual pleasure like biting of the lips, nail-marks etc., which represent cruelty and selfishness :

> yad rataṃ ca sa-dayaṃ priyasya tat Pārvatī viṣahate sma (8.9)
>
> Pārvatī accepted only the gentle love-play of the lover.

And this love is more than sexual enjoyment; it is *preman* expressed through gestures, speech and the delightful company of each other.

> bhāva-sūcitam adṛṣṭa-vipriyaṃ cāṭumat kṣaṇa-viyoga-kātaram
> kaiścid eva divasair abhūt tayoḥ prema rūḍham itaretarāśrayam (8.15)
>
> Within a very few days their love for each other increased. It was suggested by their gestures; all that was unpleasant vanished from it; it made them speak pleasing words, and even a moment's separation made it weary.

We notice also the completeness of the union; their love does not depend on anything outward; they are complete in themselves; their love depends on them alone, *itaretarāśrayam*. And this love is not a thing of darkness; when *kāma* is a part of the total life-ideal then one need not be ashamed of it. We have seen that the Seven Sages were ashamed because they were married. Kālidāsa says that one ought not to be ashamed of *kāma*, or try to conceal it. Pārvatī tries to hide her nakedness by closing with her two hands two eyes of Śiva. But the third eye remains open :

> tasya paśyati lalāṭa-locane mogha-yatna-vidhurā rahasy abhūt (8.7)
>
> The eye on his forehead kept looking on; seeing her efforts thwarted she became secretly miserable.

We can grasp the right implication of this line if we remember that the fire of this eye had burnt *kāma* to ashes. It is the same eye that looks now at Pārvatī. This implies that the *kāma* who has manifested in Pārvatī's body has to remain pure and subdued to the higher *dharmic* law otherwise he may be destroyed again.

After spending one month in this way they leave the abode of the Mountain.

(ii) ***Second movement* : *artha***

This movement which consists of verses 21-28 shows the objects of pleasure, riches, added to the element of *kāma*. These two elements which represent hedonistic desire, interest in the pleasures and riches of life,

principles for the satisfaction of physical and vital demands, were accepted by Kālidāsa. For the fulness of life these were indispensable. But Kālidāsa felt that a certain restraint had to be put on them, they had to be controlled by *dharma*.

In these verses the principle of *artha* is stressed. The couple lie on a bed of gold-leaves, *hema-pallava-vibhaṅga-saṃstarām* (8.22); Pārvatī plays with a gold-lotus, *hema-tāmarasa* (8.26); the southern breeze is their servant who fans them and flatters them (8.25). These passages remind us of the rich *nāgaraka* who possessed big fortunes, had servants, and who were surrounded by friends and flatterers. Pārvatī gets the most precious objects of desire that any woman can wish for, the flowers of the heavenly garden which are worn by the wife of Indra (8.27). In this way they experience the objects of sense-attraction, desire, luxury and fortune. The completion of this stage, which is the experience of happiness is shown by a definite action. Śiva and Pārvatī leave Meru and go to Gandhamādana.

ity abhaumam anubhūya Śaṃkara pārthivaṃ ca vanitā-sakhaḥ sukham
lohitāyati kadācid ātape Gandhamādana giriṃ nyavartata (8.28)

Thus after having enjoyed the pleasures heavenly as well as earthly in company of his wife, Śiva left for the mountain Gandhamādana one afternoon when the sun-rays were turning red.

(iii) *Third movement* : *dharma*

The third movement represents *dharma*, and may be said to go as far as the verse 50. The first two principles are not abandoned but are taken up. The riches and beauty of the previous movement recurs here as the background. ***Dharma*** need not be performed in the background of austere renunciation, for it does not refuse life, but gives the right law for the harmonious and beneficient functioning of life in its various aspects.

The very first verse of this section suggests this element, as well as the incorporating of the previous principle :

tatra kāñcana-śilātalāśrayo netra-gamyam avalokya bhāskaram
dakṣiṇetara-bhuja-vyapāśrayāṃ vyājahāra saha-dharma-cāriṇīm (8.29)

When the sun could be seen with naked eyes he sat there on a flat golden rock and clasped his wife, his companion on the path of *dharma*, with his left arm and uttered the following words : ...

The couple sit on a golden rock, *kāñcana-śilā-tala*; and the word *saha-dharma-cārinī*, lays emphasis on the aspect of *dharma*; the wife is not an object of desire, *kāminī*.

After this follows the vivid description of the evening, *sandhyā*, the time most propitious for the performance of religious rites. However it is not a time devoid of beauty, wealth and splendour, on the contrary the whole nature has become an expression of splendid richness; the sun's reflection on the lake is like a bridge of gold, *tāpaniyam iva setu-bandhanam* (8.34), the peocock's tail is like molten gold, *jātarūpa-rasa-gaura-maṇḍalaḥ* (8.36). However the main idea here is that of *dharma*.

Kālidāsa introduces the picture of the hermitages, strongholds of *dharma*, where sacrifices and *tapas* are performed, where people have the same love for all living beings, trees, plants, animals, where the holy fire is kindled :

> āviśadbhir uṭajāṅgaṇam mṛgair mūla-seka-sarasaiś ca vṛkṣakaiḥ
> āśramāḥ praviśad-agni-dhenavo bibhrati śriyam udīritāgnayaḥ (8.38)

> Their hermitages wore a wonderful beauty: with deer coming into the cottage-yards, with lush young trees the roots of which were well-watered, with the sacred fire kindled and with cows dedicated to Agni coming back home.

It is the time when hermits who know the rules of religious acts recite their holy prayers :

> brahma gūḍham abhisaṃdhyam ādṛtaḥ śuddhaye vidhi-vido gṛṇanty amī (8.47)

> ... and at sunset, in a solitary place, these hallowed ascetics, versed in the rituals, recited the holy *gāyatri*– verse for their purification.

And Śiva too goes to perform the holy rites,[6] *niyama*, such as the practices of self-purification, *śauca*, ascetic concentration, *tapas*, devotion to the Lord, *iśvara-praṇidhāna*. Even the Lord himself performs the dharmic rites (8.50) in order to teach the world the right law of living which helps man to regulate, control and use the objects of desire and interest, *kāma* and *artha*, on the one hand, and to help him rise ethically and spiritually.

(iv) *Fourth movement : mokṣa*

From *dharma* we pass to the last and highest aim of human life, *mukti*, *mokṣa*. We have already said that liberation for Kālidāsa is eternal union with the Supreme Lord, Puruṣottama. The first three stages coordinated,

harmonised, controlled under the rule of *dharma* constitute the foundation of this final stage. Man was not completely satisfied with his condition, although from the social and worldly point of view his life was full when the three *puruṣārtha* were mastered and harmonised. However Indian thought always pointed to the higher condition which not only ennobles man but takes him beyond death and duality to the unity of the soul, to immortality, *amṛtam*, to Infinity, *anantam*.

The last movement gives the poetic expression of this final stage. Śiva, just after returning from his religious rites, says :

kiṃ na vetsi saha-dharma-cāriṇam cakravāka-sama-vṛttim ātmanaḥ (8.51)

Don't you understand that I, your husband, your companion on the path of *dharma*, am in a state like that of a *cakravāka*-bird (separated from his mate) ?

It is suggested that the yearning for union remains even after the performance of *dharma*. The separation and the aspiration to union are suggested by the reference to the *cakravāka*–birds. We may here recall the mention of these same birds in the context of Pārvatī's *tapas* (5.26) where the sense of separation was in Pārvatī's heart. But now it is in reference to Śiva. This reversal of the situation is significant; because the power of *tapas*, *tapaḥ-prabhāva*, can prepare oneself for the union, but it is only the grace of the Lord, *deva-prasāda*, which can lead one to the highest realization.

Kālidāsa has suggested the transition from *dharma* to *mokṣa*, with the help of the symbols of twilight, *sandhyā*, and the night, *rātri*.[7] *Sandhyā* has been identified with *dharma*, it is the time best suited to the performance of religious rites, to meditation. Kālidāsa does not stop with the twilight; Śiva is made to describe the twilight which gradually deepens into night. The twilight is the threshold to the night, as *dharma* the threshold to *mokṣa*.

Night is the time of union; and the true light *para-jyotiḥ*, has to rise in that night. The moon represents that light; the association of the moon with Śiva and its symbolism needs no elaboration.

This new situation is not the state of absolute negation, *mokṣa* does not deny beauty. Kālidāsa uses the symbolism of physical love, in order to give a concrete picture of the spiritual union. We have seen the sudden outburst of spring, Vasanta, helper of Kāma. Now too there is an outburst of new

life, a new awakening, but it is an awakening in the world of night. And the instigator of this awakening to beauty is the Moon :

candra-pāda-janita-pravṛttibhiś candra-kānta-jala-bindubhir giriḥ
mekhalā-taruṣu nidritān amūn bodhayaty asamaye śikhaṇḍinaḥ
(8.67)

etad ucchvasīta-pītam aindavaṃ soḍhum akṣamam iva prabhā-rasam
mukta-ṣaṭ-pada-virāvam añjasā bhidyate kumudam ā nibandhanāt
(8.70)

With the drops of water from the moon-stones the flow of which was caused by the rays of the moon, the mountain wakes up the pecocks asleep in the trees on its slopes before it is time for them to get up.

The lotus drinks in a frenzy the ray-wine of the moon and as if unable to contain itself bursts suddenly open breaking the folds of its petals, and the bees released (from its clasp) begin to hum.

In Book 3 the advent of spring brought about the passionate union of the creatures. Here too in this new awakening, there is the image of union, but not sensuous, passionate, lusty; it is the union of the moon with his bride, the star (8.73), a luminous marriage.

The description which follows is apparently intensely erotic; it is the description of the final union. We have noted the gradual development from *kāma* towards this stage which is expressed by means of words and images belonging to the field of carnal love. However in the usage of words we find indications enough which prove that Kālidāsa did not mean this to be a rank return to sex or glorification of sex. ....

Wine was recognized by *Kāma-śāstra* as an aphrodisiac, for exciting passion. But Kālidāsa does not mention its use in the first part of this Book; however here the forest-deity of the mountain Gandhamādana brings wine in a crystal goblet. The word used for wine in this verse, and in the next is *madhu*; and it is not ordinary *madhu* but *kalpa-vṛkṣa-madhu*, which was meant to excite passion. The word means also honey, and nectar; it represents sweetness, joy, an elixir of beauty; for when she drinks this *madhu* a change comes upon her, a supernatural change, as if an ordinary mango tree, *āmra*, becomes a *sahakāra*, which is also a mango-tree but which is supposed to be exceptionally beautiful. Note also that the mango is a powerful symbol of spring, the mango-blossom is one of the five flower-arrows of Kāma. This transformation is an indication that Pārvatī is not a weapon and helper of Kāma but of love which has been purified, which has become *preman*.

The next verse says :

sā babhūva vaśa-vartinī dvayoḥ Śulinaḥ su-vadanā madasya ca (8.79)

And she of the lovely face, submitted herself to two influences : Śiva and Passion.

Mada means passion, but it means also excessive delight, rapture.

All these point out to the fact that the sexual description is not all; there is a suggestion of the union which is an expression of liberation.

Then follows an erotic description of the passionate love of Śiva and Pārvatī : it is a love in which time vanishes, all restrictions are ended; love for the sake of love alone, a union total eternal :

sama-divasa-niśīthaṃ saṅginas tatra Śaṃbhoḥ
satam agamad ṛtūṇāṃ sārdham eka niśeva
na sa surata-sukhebhyaś chinna-tṛṣṇo babhūva
jvalan iva samudrāntargatas taj-jalaughauḥ (8.91)

Making no difference between day and night Śiva, in love's union, passed there hundred and fifty seasons as if it were just one night. As the fire inside the ocean is not quenched by the rolling waters, likewise his (Śiva's) thirst for the delight of love-making was not quenched.

Time stands still—hundred and fifty seasons perhaps imply this limitless time. And what is very significant is the Fire inside the Water. This image naturally reminds us of the myth of the submarine fire, and the motif of Śiva under water.[8] However there is much more than a mythical reference. The manner in which Kālidāsa has orchestrated this Book and has put this metaphor as the culminating point induces us to go deeper into its various implications.

The fire under water with the association of *kāma* and *tapas* cannot but recall to our mind the Ṛgvedic Hymn of Creation (ṚV.X.129).

While preparing this final stage Kālidāsa first showed the pervasiveness of Night :

loka eṣa timirolba-veṣṭito garbha-vāsa iva vartate niśi (8.56)

This world enveloped by the membrane of darkness seems to be in gestation in the womb of night.

Compare now this line with the following verse of the ṚV-Hymn ;

tama āsīt tamasā gūḷhm agre 'praketaṃ salilaṃ sarvam ā idam
tucchenābhu apihitaṃ yad āsīt tapasas tan mahinājāyataikam

In the beginning darkness was hidden by darkness; all this was water with no distinguishing mark. That One which was hidden within the void, took birth by the power of *tapas*.

We can discern quite a close reflection of this verse in Kālidāsa's description. All is covered by darkness, and this world, *idam*, was nothing but indistinguishable water. And in that water arose the One by the power of *tapas*. That which was one undifferentiated divides itself as *ekam* and *idam*: and *tapas* is the principle that links the two. This is from the cosmogonical point of view; but from the psychological point of view the force is *kāma*, the seers have found out looking into their hearts the power in the non-existent which is linked with the existent. *Sat* and *asat* are the same as *ekam* and *idam*, the latter being *apraketaṃ salilam*. Therefore we see that the same energy seen from the side of *ekam* is *tapas*, *seen* from the side of *idam*, it is *kāma*.

Or we may say that the same linking principle is *tapas* on the higher plane, and *kāma* on the earthly.

Tapas and *kāma* lie on the two poles of existence. Human aspiration must follow the reverse path; from separation towards union, from *kāma* towards *tapas*, and the *tapas* then brings the Gift, *prayati*, (ṚV.X.129.5) which is union of *idam* with *ekam*, of the human with the Divine, of Prakṛti with Puruṣa. One can also think of going back to the undifferentiated state beyond creation when there was neither *sat* nor *asat*. The latter too has been a cherished ideal of many Indians, but Kālidāsa's ideal is, very evidently, the liberation in union.

When we read the last verse of Book 8 in this light we find that Kālidāsa is suggesting to us the spiritual union not only on the human plane but also on the cosmic plane. And that this union is something dynamic, a thing of constant delight which has no end. This is suggested by the phrase :

na sa surata-sukhebhyaś chinna-tṛṣṇo babhūva

his thirst for the delight of love-making was not quenched.

REFERENCES

1. Rabindranath Tagore, "Kumarsaṃbhava o Śakuntalā," p. 515.
2. See the previous chapter where some of the verses are quoted.
3. M. R. Kale, *Kumārasaṃbhava*, Notes, p. 96.
4. With the evolution of *bhakti* a clear distinction was made between *perman*, or *prema-bhakti* on the hand and *kāma* on the other. Although Kālidāsa does not give to *perman*

any mystical meaning yet we find that the word is used more in the sense of "the bond of hearts" than the carnal desire. In *Raghu.* he writes *bhāva-bandhanaṃ... yat prema paraś-parāśrayam* (3.24).

5. Kālidāsa uses the most concrete expression in order to evoke the subtlest experiences.

6. Here one point seems a bit confusing. Śiva aska Pārvatī to grant him leave to go and perform the holy rites. But Pārvatī does not reply; she is angry. Yet Śiva goes away, and only after he comes back does he try to appease her. Kāle has tried to explain this in the light of *śṛṅgāra*. He writes, "This *avadhīraṇā* [disregard in not vouchsafing Śiva the permission asked by him] shown by Pārvatī is what the rhetoricians call *bibboka bhāva*, which is thus defined—*garvābhimānādiṣṭe 'pi bibboko 'nādara-kriyā*, DR. II; it is "the neglectful behaviour, even toward one that is loved, because of haughtiness due to pride". M. R. Kale, *Kumārasaṃbhava*, Notes, p. 151. This explanation is not satisfactory; there is here no reason whatsoever for *bibboka*. The justification of Pārvatī's behaviour lies elsewhere. We have seen earlier that Pārvatī is called *saha-dharma-cāriṇī* (8.29) and after Śiva comes back having performed the dharmic rites he denotes himself as *saha-dharma-cārin* (8.51). But yet he went away to perform the rites all by himself. The reason of Pārvatī's anger lies in Śiva's refusal to allow her to participate in the rites.

7. For the semiotic value of 'night' see the previous chapter.

8. See W. D. O'Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism*, pp. 286ff. Her commentary on this verse of Kālidāsa : "The water controls but cannot quench this consuming heat. This is expressed by a verse that combines the symbols of Pārvatī and Śiva as water and fire with the central image of their balance : the fiery mare at the bottom of the sea". p. 289.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

Kālidāsa is a poet and KS is poetry. KS is not a philosophical work; not even philosophical poetry. It is certainly not a treatise on dharmic law; it does not propose to show the way of union with the divine or liberation from this phenomenal existence. It does not try to guide, or serve any immediate social or religious purpose. We have tried to find out some aspects of the multidimensional world of poetic experience, especially of the dimension of thought, if we may give it a name, in which abstract ideas have taken body, have become images and symbols, in which the general has changed into the particular, the abstract into the sensuous.

The structre of this poem is extremely complex. The poem unfolds itself, at the same time, on different planes. But structurally we find that in each plane there is a tension of opposites. The conflict is there; but this does not ever become tragic or destructive. Kālidāsa takes his stand on equanimity, on a point of equilibrium from where he sees the opposites, accepts them as real in the world-process, even as needful for the proliferation of the universe. But the tension of opposites is not the absolute truth. A wise man is he who sees the causes of perturbation but remains unaffected, for he stands above, where the opposites are harmonized. Therefore Kālidāsa, speaking of Śiva in the very first Book, says :

vikāra-hetau sati vikriyante yeṣām na cetāṃsi ta eva dhīrāḥ (1.59)

They alone are wise whose minds are not perturbed even when there is a cause of perturbation.

Kālidāsa's mind, nor his imagination, remains content with the just apprehension of this tension. He has tried to make poetically, that is to say, imaginatively, not systematically, a synthesis between the opposites. And he has certainly succeeded; and that success is the poem itself. One must read this poem with a mind steeped in the sense of beauty, and through the

experience of beauty the sympathetic reader, *sahṛdaya*, can grasp the harmony. But scholars and critics have the thankless task of breaking up what the poet has put together. In the poet's experience there is no distance between the image and the thought, the sense and the sound. We should not forget that KS is a poem, *kāvya*, a thing of beauty, not a system of concepts. And only after that recognition can we safely venture into the regions of thought. We have also to be *dhīrāḥ* if we want to appreciate fully the poem, and participate in the poet's vision. Thoughts as such can indeed be causes of perturbation, *vikāra-hetu*, to the aesthetic experience, but when we recognize them and do not let our discerning mind be overshadowed by them then we are *dhīrāḥ*.

The substratum of ideas which we have tried to explore is vast and comprises much of the ideal and aspiration of the Indian mind. But the central idea that runs through the whole poem is that of harmony. Rabindranath Tagore says that in Kālidāsa there is always the awareness of the conflict between the inner and the outer, between the actual situation and the ideal to be achieved. In most of Kālidāsa's works, according to him, this conflict is clearly expressed. In KS Kālidāsa shows that the solution lies in the harmony between renuciation, *tyāga*, and plenty, *aiśvarya*, between asceticism *tapasyā*, and love, *preman*; from this union is born valour which redeems men[1]. But the birth of valour, symbolized by the birth of Kumāra, is only hinted at in the poem. However, as far as it goes, the poem has reached a climax which leaves us in no doubt of the final victory. Kumāra's birth, as a physical fact, has not been described. But is that necessary? We recognize easily the inevitability of this birth. KS is hardly a narrative poem; the elements of narration are certainly present but they serve more as symbols than as events; they form the framework within which ideas and experiences take form. Therefore the narration of the birth of Kumāra is really not essential to the completeness of the poem.

Now we would like to say a few words about the nature of the poem. As we have studied mainly the aspect of ideas the reader may easily be misled to think that we consider KS to be a philosophical poem. God forbid! There are ideas but they are only materials of the poem, not the poem itself; and we should recognize them as such. In this context we may remember what Sri Aurobindo says, "Material for his poetry they (philosophical ideas) may give, an influence in it they may be, provided they are transmuted into vision and life by the poetical spirit, but they can be neither its soul nor its aim, nor give the law to its creative activity and its expression."[2]

In poetry it is the language giving expression which finally counts. Poetic language has an immediacy of utterance which evokes ideas and emotions experienced by the poet. The experience itself may be absolutely unique or it may have support aud justification of some philosophy, mythology, science or mysticism. The experience of Kālidāsa is not unique; he did not try to convey to his reader the sense of an unforeseen experience. He accepted the insight of the Indian sages but gave to it, through his own poetic imagination, a new body. And of the elements which constitute the body images and symbols stand in the forefront. These belong to what the Indian poetics call *arthālaṃkāra*. In this study we have not taken into account the effect of *śabdālaṃkāra*, such as rhythm, alliterations, assonances etc. which form an integral part of Kālidāsa's art, and can hardly be dissociated from the sense-value, without doing violence to the poetic beauty. But in the matter of ideas these figures seem so allusive that we have thought it preferable to keep them out of our consideration.

The suggestions conveyed by symbols and images are comparatively easier to grasp, although there remain always the influence of the critic's personal beliefs, the determinisms of his own culture, his *saṃskāra* and *vāsanā*[3], —to use two terms from Indian philosophy. Nevertheless symbols, images, and other figures of sense and sound convey a meaning. The ideal of Indian poetry was "conveying, not telling." Directly telling was considered a fault.[4] Kālidāsa is an unsurpassed master in the art of conveying. The symbols we have studied bear testimony to this fact. Traditionally he was given the highest place among Indian poets for his metaphors, *upamā Kālidāsasya*.[5] These metaphors have contributed much to the suggestions, and have helped to concretize the symbols.

In this connection I should like to add that this poetry is not mystical or spiritual: it is an expression of beauty. There is an intense sense of the spirit but the experience is intellectual and aesthetic. The mind that is at work is not mystical though highly sensitive to the spiritual background of Indian culture. The love of God is there present; but it is not the love of the God-intoxicated man. The spiritual ideal "is part of his intellectual equipment, no doubt, but nothing much more than that."[6]

This is sensuous poetry. The experiences of the Spirit, the intellectual ideas, are all transmuted into sense-perceptions. Concepts are not thought-out, they are grasped, they are made into living poetic objects, full of colour, charm, music. And because of this sensuousness the erotic image has a special place. Even the God-experience is expressed by means of erotic

images. However, eroticism is not the opposite of beauty; and because of the sensuous concreteness of erotic images, they have been of great service to Kālidāsa's poetic utterance.

Indian and Western critics have sometimes condemned this eroticism in poetry. However the modern outlook on life has changed considerably and sex has got back its legitimate place in poetry. Sex has however to be poetically treated, as also the highest moral religious or philosophical ideas, before it can have place in poetry. A modern Indian critic says, "There is no such thing as erotic poetry, for the very moment when the poet's imagination takes the form of poetry it surpasses eroticism."[7]

This remark is very true but it needs some clarification about what poetic imagination and poetry are. It is beyond our present scope to enter into these fundamental questions which have as yet not been adequately answered. However, I hope that most readers will feel what is meant here.

Keith too found that mid-Victorian standards of morality cannot be applied to Sanskrit poetry. "To apply mid-Victorian conceptions of propriety to India is obviously absurd and wholly misleading. Indian writers, not excluding Kālidāsa, indulge habitually *con amore* in minute descriptions of the beauty of women and the delights of love which are not in accord with western conventions of taste (...) What is essential is to repel the connexion of such descriptions with immorality and to assert that they must be approved or condemned on artistic grounds alone."[8] Keith has certainly shown much tolerance in wanting to repel the connection of erotic description with immorality. But poetry written for adults and read by adults with a normal healthy life does not need even such apology. And moreover to condemn KS, even the Book 8, on the grounds of morality would be ridiculous. The Book is far from immoral as we have tried to show, for it lifts the aspirations and ideals of men step by step to the highest summit of divine realisation.

In Kālidāsa there is no eroticism for the sake of eroticism; eroticism is a part of the world-beauty. Kālidāsa, it has often been repeated, is a poet of the senses. But the senses are expressions of the Divine Reality behind, Therefore he takes delight in calling his beloved God Śiva, *aṣṭa-mūrti*. After we read him we can, I think, agree unconditionally with what Sri Aurobindo wrote in one of his early writings, "... through the passion of delight and the sense of life and of love in all beautiful objects we reach the Mighty Spirit behind them whom our soul recognizes no longer as an object of knowledge or of worship but as her lover to whom she must fly..."[9]

Neither has Tagore condemned this eroticism in Kālidāsa's poetry; he too finds that the sensuous love was depicted in the bright hues of youthful charm; but the flow of this love reached its fulfilment in the quietness of blissful and auspicious union, *maṅgala-milana*.[10]

In KS Kālidāsa gives us a world-vision. The vision as such is not altogether personal; it is deep-rooted in India's cultural soil. Nevertheless the vision has acquired a very strong personal stamp which we may call Kālidāsian. We would like to conclude by saying a few words about this vision.

It is deep-rooted because it finds its sustenance in the ancient scriptures. The ṚV says, *amartyo martyena sa-yonih* (ṚV.I.164.30), "*amartya*, the immortal, is born in the same womb as *martya*, the mortal."

The Vedic age did not create any unbridgeable gulf between the two, but the later trend in Indian thought made the distinction more and more complete. Nevertheless the ascetic denial of the world was only one part of the Indian spiritual vision; it had, in various periods of history, no doubt, a very great influence of the people's mentality yet it was never strong enough to wipe out the world-reality. Pure materialism, or the materialist's denial of the Spirit was never a strong force in spite of the *lokāyata* philo sophies. Therefore the two important trends which determined the Indian thought were : (1) the other-worldly ascetic ideal, which denied any reality to the world, (2) the synthetic ideal which saw the world as a becoming of the Spirit. "The evolution of Indian Culture", writes Feuerstein, "presents itself as a process of tension between two equally powerful trends : the one other–worldly or ascetic and the other syncretic or holistic. (...) Both tendencies co-existed from earliest times and have mutually enriched, complemented and influenced each other."[11]

The approach of Kālidāsa is clearly holistic; he did not accept the ascetic denial of the world, neither did he deny asceticism, which he thought was essential to a better integration of life in the world and the Spirit. Kālidāsa did not, on the other hand, accept the hedonistic view of life which must have been quite strong in the period he lived in, as we can gather from most of his works: life had to be purified, the pleasure-principle had to be transmuted into the substance of divine delight, before it could be integrated in the total life-view. Tagore notices in Kālidāsa the conflict between the holistic ideal of the by–gone ages of the Veda and the Upaniṣad, and the absolute hedonism of his own age, especially the extravagant luxury of the royal courts he was familiar with. And according to Tagore, Kālidāsa suffered from a

strong feeling of exile and would like to go back to the ideal of the forest-schools, the ancient hermitages, *tapo-vana*, where the sages lived and taught, the sages who "were seekers after truth", who led a simple life "but not the life of self-mortification".

Writes Tagore, "It was not the physical home-sickness from which the poet suffered, it was something far more fundamental, the home-sickness of the soul. We feel from almost all his works the aggressive atmosphere of the kings' palaces of those days, dense with things of luxury, and also with the callousness of self-indulgence, albeit an atmosphere of refined culture based on an extravagant civilization.

"The poet in the royal court lived in banishment—banishment from the immediate presence of the eternal. He knew it was not merely his own banishment but that of the whole age to which he was born, the age that had gathered its wealth and missed its well-being, built its storehouse of things and lost its background of the great universe."[12]

There is, in what Tagore says, a lot of self-transposition, and perhaps an exaggeration of the situations in the royal courts. At least in KS the royal court of Himālaya hardly fits with the description that Tagore gives; *artha* is, we have seen, an ideal that King Himālaya and Queen Menā accepted and typified, yet it was not just luxury, and pleasure; they had never lost sight of *dharma*, and Himālaya did not hesitate to grant Pārvatī the permission to go and practise *tapas*. It is also difficult to read in his works the sense of spiritual banishment; Kālidāsa loved life in all its manifestations from the material to the spiritual, and everywhere it is this love that finds expression. However one thing is true, the philosophy that Kālidāsa made his own was, in Tagore's words, "never a philosophy of renunciation of a negative character, but a realization completely comprehensive."[13]

The picture that we get of life and ideals at the time of Kālidāsa, particularly from the reading of KS, is not one of anguish and exile but of globality. Sri Aurobindo gives a good account of this: "... We have in Kālidāsa an intense hedonistic impulse thrilling through speech and informing action. An imaginative pleasure in all shades of thought and of sentiment, a rich delight of the mind in its emotions, a luxuriousness of ecstasy and grief, a free abandonment of amorous impulse and rapture, a continual joy of life and seeking of beauty mark the period when India, having for the time exhausted the possibilities of soul-experience attainable through the spirit and the imaginative reason, was now attempting to find out the utmost each sense could feel, probing and sounding the soul-possibilities in Matter and even sec-

king God through the senses. The emotional religion of the Vaishnava Puraṇas which takes, as its type of the relation between the human soul and the Supreme, the passion of a woman for her lover, was already developing."[14]

The idea of the Spirit, the presence of the Spirit is there everywhere in KS but it is always in relation to humanity. Both Tagore and Aurobindo point to this fact. After our study of KS we can certainly accept without reserve this opinion of theirs. In KS the personages are gods, demi-gods, spirits, but they are brought near to us; they speak our human language; their thoughts, feelings are human, without however losing the mystery that we attach to the supernatural, to the divine.

Kālidāsa did not accept the quarrel between man and God, between earth and heaven. He knew that humanity is the meeting-place of the two so-called opposites. He did not deny the complete scheme of existence: the highest Brahman, absolute, undifferentiated, even Unknowable; Īśvara, the Lord, the Eternal Lover; the Universal Spirit, the Soul of all this, of all material things; and finally the material things themselves. And within that scheme it was humanity that was the subject of his preoccupation, for we can know and live only as human beings. It is because he never denied our humanness that we find so little place of the Absolute Brahman in his thought-world. He recognized Brahman but did not accept the path of world-negation. He knew that humanity as it is, the lower life of man, had to be uplifted, guided, transmuted so that man can reach the goal which is spiritual union of the human with the Divine. But for him it is not only the 'reaching' but also the 'moving forward' which must be made into a thing of beauty, must be an expression of God. Not a strict bare monastic ideal,—the Seven Sages are no longer ashamed of their married life: Śiva himself has married and accepted the *tri-varga*–, which finally denies life and society, Kālidāsa's ideal was to embrace into a harmonious whole all the possibilities and capabilities of men, use them for the mastery of the lower nature, physical as well as psychological, so that in the end man could find his highest fulfilment in the union with God.

The ideal of the *tri-varga* with *dharma* as the guiding principle is no doubt a high goal, and enough for most people, yet the accomplishment lies in the fourth aim of life; it is only there that man really is liberated. In order to attain that liberation, one has even to abandon *dharma* as the Gītā says. Kālidāsa too symbolically shows this in Book 8. Speaking of the last aim, the spiritual aim of life, Sri Aurobindo writes: "Spiritual freedom, spiritual perfection were not figured as a far-off intangible ideal, but presented as the highest human aim towards which all must grow in the end and were made

near and possible to his endeavour from a first practicable basis of life and the Dharma. The spiritual idea governed, enlightened and gathered towards itself all the other life-motives of a great civilised people."[15]

This suits perfectly the vision of Kālidāsa. In KS we find a symbolic expression of the holistic view of existence having as its culminating point the aim of spiritual perfection.

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1. See, Prabodh Chandra Sen, *Bhārat-pathik Rabindranāth*, p. 125.
2. Sri Aurobindo, *The Future Poetry*, p. 31.
3. The word *saṃskāra*, writes S. N. Dasgupta, "means the impressions [which exist subconsciously in the mind] of the object exprienced. All our experiences whether cognitive, emotional or conative exist in subconcious state and may under suitable condition be reproduced as memory (*smṛti*). (...) But *vāsanā* generally refers to the tendencies of past lives most of which lie dormant in the mind. Only those appear which can find scope in this life. But *saṃskāras* are the subconcious states which are being constantly generated by experience. *Vāsanās* are innate *saṃskāras* not acquired in this life". *A History of Indian Philosophy*, I. p. 263.
4. See, J. L. Masson, "Telling, not Conveying", pp. 145ff.
5. *upamā Kālidāsasya Bhāraver artha-gauravam*
Daṇḍinaḥ pada-lālityaṃ Māghe santi trayo guṇaḥ
Except for Kālidāsa's metaphors the judgement is completely inacceptable. Bhāravi's *artha-gaurava* is only true if we take the word in its literal meaning of 'heaviness', not in the sense of 'depth of meaning'. Kālidāsa's *pada-lālitya* is, without any shade of doubt, greater than that of the poets mentioned here. We may think of Jayadeva for sweetness and grace. Jayadeva's sweetness is more cloying, Kālidāsa's is subtler and poetically more satisfying. And as regeards the judgment about Māgha, we can only say that the couplet was perhaps composed by Māgha himself, or by some blind admirer of him.
6. Nalini Kanta Gupta, *Poets and Mystics*, p. 63.
7. Pramatha Chaudhury, *Citrāṅgadā*, p. 207.
8. A. B. Keith, *op. cit.*, pp. 309-10.
9. Sri Aurobindo, *Kalidasa*, p. 295.
10. Rabindranath Tagore, "Kumārasaṃbhava o Śakuntalā," p. 512.
11. G. A. Feuerstein, *op. cit.*, p. 148.
12. Rabindranath Tagore, *The Religion of Man*, p. 103.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 103.
14. Sri Aurobindo, *Kalidasa*, p. 226.
15. Sri Aurobindo, *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, pp. 122-3.

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AV	*Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā*
BĀU	*Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*
ChU	*Chāndogya-Upaniṣad*
DR	*Daśarūpaka* of Dhanañjaya
Gītā	*Bhagavad-gītā*
Īśa	*Īśa-Upaniṣad*
Kāmasūtra	*Kāmasūtra* of Vātsyāyana
Kaṭha	*Kaṭha-Upaniṣad*
KM	*Kāvya-mīmāṃsā* of Rājaśekhara, G. O. S. 1934.
KS	*Kumārasaṃbhava* of Kālidāsa
MBh	*Mahābhārata*. Critical Edition. B. O. R. I. 1933-66.
Mā	*Māṇḍukya-Upaniṣad*
Manu	*Manusmṛti*
Matsya-P.	*Matsya-Purāṇa*
Mu	*Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad*
NŚ	*Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata
Raghu	Raghuvaṃśa of Kālidāsa
ṚV	*Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā*
Śakuntalā	*Abhijñāna-Śakuntala* of Kālidāsa
Taitt. Ār.	*Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka*
Taitt. Up.	*Taittirīya-Upaniṣad*
SD	*Sāhitya-darpaṇa* of Viśvanātha
SK	*Sāṃkhya-kārikā*
ŚB	*Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*
Śv. U.	*Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad*
VS	*Vājasaneyi-Sāṃhitā*
Vallabhadeva	*Subhāṣitāvali* of Vallabhadeva

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